

# WOKINGHAM BOROUGH

## ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP PLAN AND SCHEME

Updated 2025



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## **PART 1 – ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP PLAN**

**(1st October 2023 – 30th September 2028)**

### **1.1 Introduction**

- 1.1.1 The Wokingham Borough Enhanced Partnership (EP) Plan is made in accordance with Section 138G(1) of the Transport Act 2000 by Wokingham Borough Council ('the Council').
- 1.1.2 Wokingham Borough Council and local bus operators have been working in partnership to deliver bus services across the borough. This has been a major factor in the steady growth in passengers over the past 10 years, which contrasts with the national trend and that seen in the wider Southeast region. The success of local bus services is a result of continued investment in local bus services for growth areas such as Shinfield, and investment by bus operators in bespoke service brandings and new vehicles.
- 1.1.3 Most local bus services in Wokingham Borough already support new technologies such as contactless payment, audio, and visual announcement, wi-fi and USB charging which enhance the passenger experience of bus travel. Wokingham Borough Council has promoted bus travel to residents and employees, both existing and new through its My Journey brand. Meanwhile, Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses have developed an award-winning mobile application to bring journey planning, ticketing, and live information all in one place.
- 1.1.4 The pandemic has had a significant effect on bus travel across the borough. Councillors approved nearly £700,000 of additional funding to help the borough's bus services recover from the impacts of the pandemic and taken difficult decisions to increase local parking charges. Work has been completed at Winnersh Triangle and Coppid Beech Park and Ride sites using Local Enterprise Partnership Funding. Through partnership working use of the Thames Valley Park and Ride has continued to grow. Local bus operators have invested in new fleet, new ticketing technology and provided additional journeys. Improvements have also been made to ticketing arrangements and the cost of travel. However, we understand that affordability challenges still exist particularly for young people, those seeking employment and adults who draw on care and support. Moving forward we will work with local bus companies to continue to improve the number of buses available, the affordability of bus travel and journey times. We are also eager to see the introduction of the first electric buses in the borough on route 21, which is expected in September 2025.

- 1.1.5 Following the publication of the National Bus Strategy, Bus Back Better, Wokingham Borough Council and local bus operators have entered into an Enhanced Partnership agreement to formalise partnership working. The vision for the Enhanced Partnership is:

#### **Vision**

**The Council's vision for Bus Services in Wokingham Borough is for a high-quality bus network for residents and visitors that contributes towards improving accessibility, local air quality, reducing road congestion and enabling carbon neutrality by 2030.**

- 1.1.6 The objectives and the approach of the Enhanced Partnership are summarised below.

#### **Objectives**

##### **Objective 1: Grow passenger numbers to pre-pandemic levels and to continue to strive for growth.**

Whilst bus passenger journeys in Wokingham Borough increased against the national trend for the 10-years leading up until 2020, the effects of the pandemic have been significant. Bus passenger levels are at about 81% of their pre-pandemic levels and concessionary travel remains the most affected. Residents place a high importance on high quality, affordable and accessible local bus services. To help deliver this growth the Borough will be innovative and harness entrepreneurship to constantly strive for a better product.

##### **Objective 2: Return bus services to pre-pandemic levels, improve levels of service and extend to new areas of travel demand.**

By 2037, the population of Wokingham Borough is projected to reach 180,900 people, which is the equivalent to adding 20 people a day. Wokingham Borough Council's Core Strategy and Local Plan update set out the plans for the delivery of 10,000 new homes and the associated communities and infrastructure across the borough. As the borough continues to grow local bus services must support and enable residents to make the journeys they need to make. It is also part of the growing Thames Valley region.

##### **Objective 3: Improve accessibility to transport services and the local bus network for communities in more rural and low-density areas.**

Ensure facilities and buses are accessible for all. In rural communities the difficulties some residents experience with poor accessibility to local transport provisions, and the effects this can have on their ability to access key services, is understood and needs to be improved upon.

##### **Objective 4: Improve bus journey times, reliability and punctuality along key transport corridors.**

Along many of the main transport corridors buses are delayed in traffic especially during peak periods. While there are physical constraints

along sections of road due to the nature of the road network, every effort is needed to deliver bus priority measures with bus lanes, bus gates and traffic signals. There is also potential to speed up boarding times with ticketing systems. Reducing journey time variation so there is greater reliability is also important.

**Objective 5: Make fares affordable and simpler.**

As the cost-of-living increases, making fares affordable is more important than ever. Fares in Wokingham Borough are below the national average for an average 3-mile journey. Targeted fare reductions have already taken place in some areas of the borough because of feedback from passengers. Discussions are taking place with Reading borough about joint fare schemes which will benefit many residents in the borough and encourage bus travel. The opening and relaunch of park and ride sites in the borough present a good opportunity to consider a strategy for seamless, affordable fares and ticketing schemes with the aim of attracting more passengers back to these services.

**Objective 6: Deliver a greener bus network by reducing carbon emissions and provide residents with attractive, comfortable, modern and greener travel alternatives.**

The Council is aware of the pressing concerns of the climate change and has committed to reaching carbon neutrality by 2030. The way residents travel and the distances covered have a significant impact on the borough's carbon footprint. One bus has the potential to take 75 cars off local roads, reduce congestion and reduce the associated carbon footprints by 111 tCO<sub>2</sub>e. With approximately 5,101 miles driven in the Borough for each of these cars per year, we will encourage residents and visitors to make greener choices in the way that they travel. Buses will also be greener with more eclectic buses (ZEBs).

**Objective 7: Improve bus integration with rail passengers, cyclists, pedestrians and car drivers.**

Interchanges and bus stops need to be convenient, easy to use, comfortable and safe. Rail passengers require easy access to bus services. Bus stops should be the appropriate standard (Gold, Silver or Bronze) and be well maintained. Our Park & Ride services will need to offer a seamless, comfortable, and convenient travel experience to make them attractive and ensure viability.

**Objective 8: Improve passenger engagement and satisfaction of bus services.**

It is important that passengers are satisfied with the services provided to both retain and attract more passengers to local bus services. We will talk to community forums and review the National Highways and Transport surveys for Wokingham Borough to help identify aspects of bus

travel which are most important to residents and those aspects where there is least satisfaction, to allow for effective targeting of improvements.

**Objective 9: Ensure bus travel is a safe means of transport.**

Bus travel is generally considered a safe mode of transport, thanks largely to strong regulations governing drivers and vehicles. However, personal safety can be a concern; secure bus stops, well-lit routes, and onboard safety measures are essential to address these concerns.

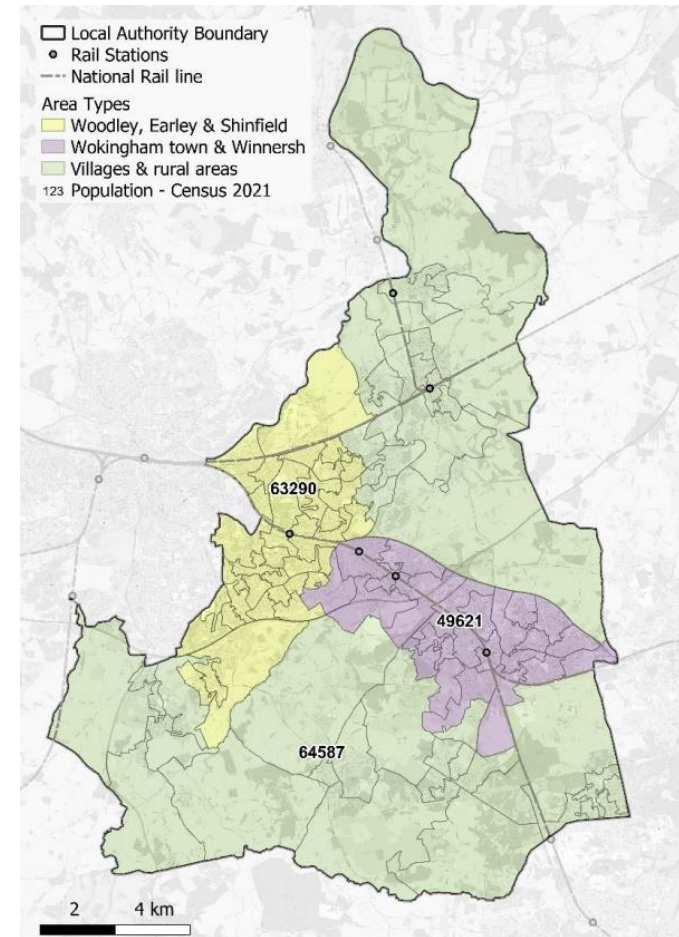
**1.1.7 Competition Test**

The Wokingham Enhanced Partnership Scheme has been subject to the Competition Test as set out in Part 1 of Schedule 10 of the Transport Act 2000. Wokingham Borough Council believes the Enhanced Partnership Scheme will not or is unlikely to have a significantly adverse effect on competition, for the purposes of Part 1 of Schedule 10 of the Transport Act 2000. The Enhanced Partnership Scheme is aimed at delivering improvements to bus services for passengers in a deregulated environment. The Enhanced Partnership Scheme will not impact on competition, as operators will be free to amend and introduce services in the area if the standards which universally apply to all operators are met.

## 1.2 Extent of Wokingham Enhanced Partnership

- 1.2.1 Both the Enhanced Partnership (EP) Plan and the Enhanced Partnership (EP) Scheme cover the full administrative boundary of Wokingham Borough. The full administrative boundary and the area within the borough are shown in Figure EP1-1. Any changes to the area covered by the Enhanced Partnership Scheme will be subject to an EP Scheme Variation, to be agreed as per Section 5 of the EP Scheme.
- 1.2.2 Wokingham Borough Council has worked closely with neighbouring authorities to ensure a consistent approach to the Enhanced Partnership for cross-boundary travel. The Council has worked closely with Reading Borough Council in particular, given the significant daily movements between Wokingham and Reading Boroughs. Neighbouring authorities will continue to be engaged with the Enhanced Partnership on a non-statutory basis through the Enhanced Partnership Forum.

Figure EP1-1 – Enhanced Partnership Plan Area - Wokingham Unitary Authority Boundary



1.2.3 The EP Plan has no end date and will be reviewed at least every five (5) years from the commencement date on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2023 or until it is varied or revoked in accordance with Section 5 of the EP Scheme. The Enhanced Partnership is formed of the following Schemes:

Scheme 1. – Borough wide Enhanced Partnership Scheme

1.2.4 Scheme 1 will be in place for a period of five years and commence 70 days after the making of the Enhanced Partnership (29<sup>th</sup> September 2023) or until it is varied or revoked in accordance with Section 5 of the EP Scheme.

1.2.5 Additional Schemes may be added at any time subject to the mechanism set out in Section 5 of the EP Scheme.

1.2.6 Each of the EP Schemes will be reviewed annually. An annual progress report will be produced and published on the anniversary of the adoption of the Enhanced Partnership Plan (30<sup>th</sup> September each year). A full review of the Enhanced Partnership Plan (including its extent, objectives, and partnership governance) and Schemes (including measures and facilities provided, and requirements imposed) and compliance of both with competition legislation will take place in the 12 months prior to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2028.

1.2.7 The implementation of any changes to the EP Plan will be in accordance with the Bespoke Arrangements in Section 5 of the EP Scheme.

1.2.8 The implementation of any changes to an EP Scheme will be in accordance with the Bespoke Arrangements in Section 5 of the EP Scheme.

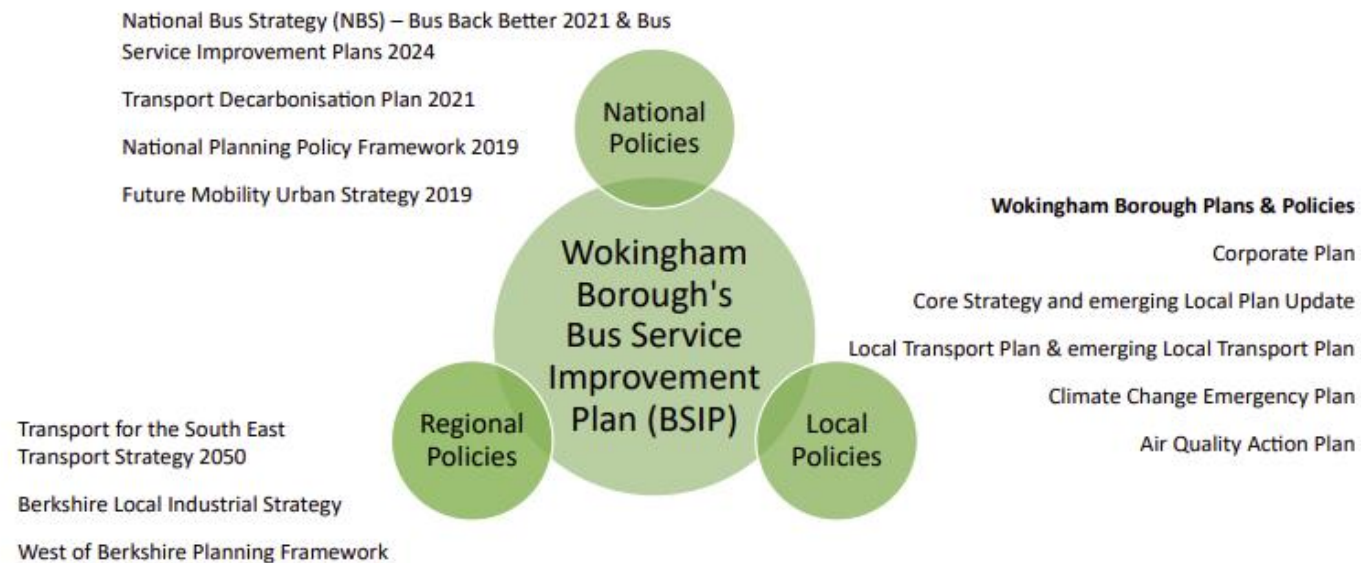


- 1.2.9 Engagement with key stakeholders has been undertaken in preparation of the Local Bus Service Improvement Plan, including all local bus, rail, and community transport operators as well as those in the volunteer sector. The Council's engagement has extended to Town and Parish Councils who represent the views of their residents, in addition to some local resident associations. Discussions have also been undertaken with representatives of the Department for Work and Pensions, young and elderly carers, and the local Mental Health Alliance Partnership. The responses to engagement for the Local Bus Service Improvement Plan have informed the Enhanced Partnership implementation of any changes to the EP Scheme will be in accordance with the Bespoke Arrangements in Section 5 of the EP Scheme.
- 1.2.10 Independent comprehensive passenger surveys for the two largest local bus operators in the borough, Reading Buses and Thames Valley Buses, were used to inform the development of the Enhanced Partnership and similar surveys will be used to monitor and evaluate its success subject to available funding. Residents' annual responses to the National Highways and Transportation survey have been considered in relation to satisfaction with local bus services and will be used to monitor and evaluate the success of the Enhanced Partnership.

### **1.3 Policy Context**

- 1.3.1 The EP Plan aligns with key national, regional, and local policies as shown on Figure EP1-2. In particular, the objectives highlighted in the National Bus Strategy (NBS) to "get bus use back to what it was before the pandemic [and] then ... increase patronage and raise buses mode share". With one of the highest levels of car ownership in the country, buses in Wokingham Borough will truly need to meet the NBS's aspiration of being an attractive alternative to the car for far more people.

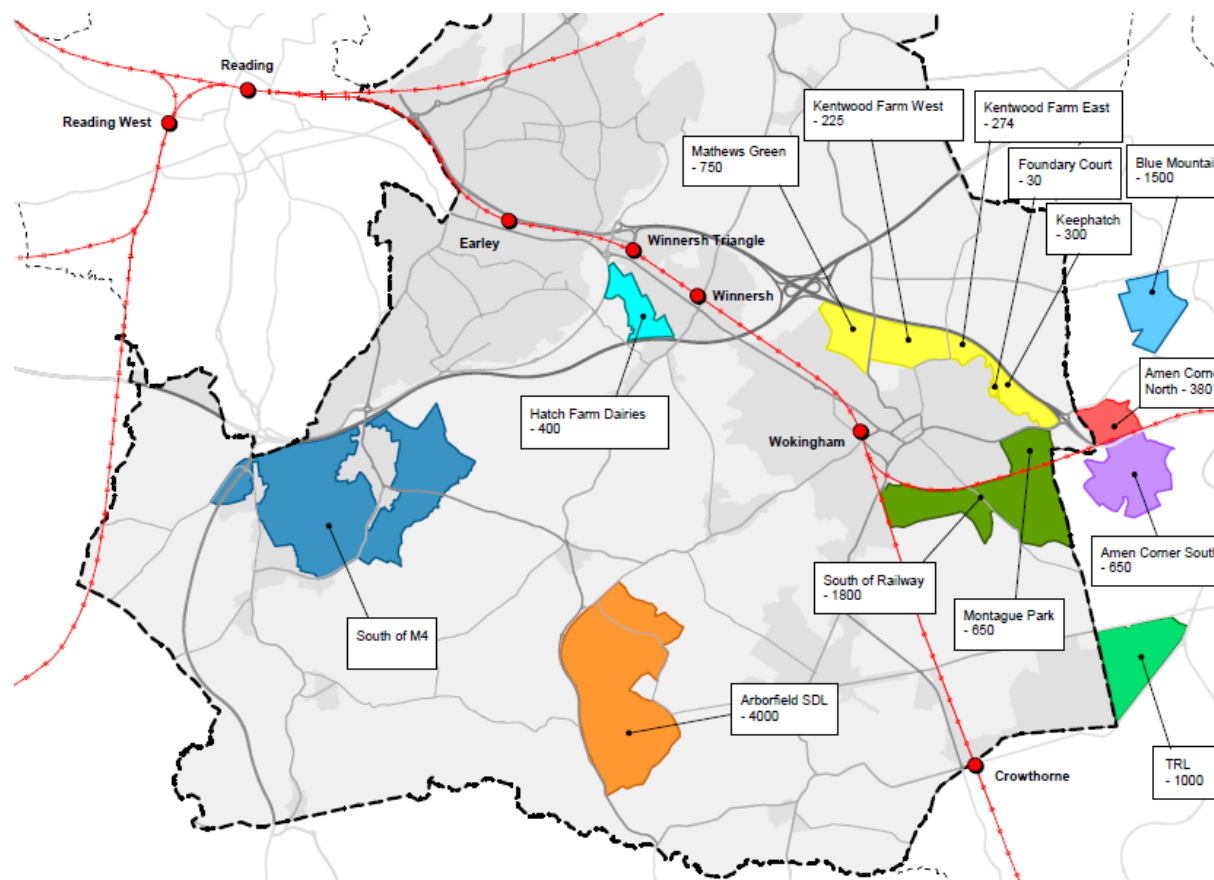
Figure EP1-2 – The Policy Framework



The EP Plan fully aligns with the emerging vision of LTP4 to deliver and maintain a safe, reliable, and joined-up transport system that connects new and existing communities, businesses and commercial centres. In achieving the vision, we will ensure our bus network is easy to understand, provides faster journey times and integrates with other modes of travel.

The Council's Core Strategy sets out the Council plans for accommodating up to 10,000 new homes in the borough by 2026, as required by Central Government housing allocations set for Wokingham Borough. Figure 1-3 shows where most new homes are accommodated in one of four strategic development locations, these are: North Wokingham (yellow), South Wokingham (green), the area to the South of the M4 (blue) and in and around Arborfield (orange).

Figure EP 1-3 – Strategic Development Locations



1.3.2 Key plans and strategies the EP aligns with are listed below:

- **Local Transport Plan 4** – to reduce congestion and improve productivity, tackle climate change, reduce social exclusion, improve network resilience and future-proof transport networks for new and emerging technology.
- **Climate Emergency Action Plan** – the promotion of active and sustainable travel choices, encouraging greater use of public transport networks, encouraging transport operators to use greener vehicles and the use of intelligent transport systems to prevent future congestion.
- **Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) 2011-2026** – a focus on sustainable travel, particularly in our Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) in Wokingham Town and at Twyford Crossroads. Emissions from vehicles can negatively impact on the levels of air quality, and therefore present a particular challenge for buses with their stop, start nature.
- **Economic Development Strategy 2016-2021** – creating a borough where businesses can thrive and encouraging innovation and technology to build a competitive environment. For local bus services this means increasing links in and around Wokingham Borough, particularly with strategic transport hubs such as Twyford where Crossrail is introduced.
- **Intelligent Transport Strategy** (draft) – maximising the use of new technology in making the most efficient use of road and junction capacity for all users. The focus is on digital technologies which aim to reduce congestion and improve journey times. Digital technologies can be used to provide live information to residents on the day to day running of transport networks, including live data on actual journey times, air quality levels, availability of car share vehicles, integrated ticketing, and bus arrival times.
- **Local Walking and Cycling Implementation Plan (LCWIP)** (draft) – with the development of local walking and cycling networks across the borough. By co-ordinating the approach of the Local Bus Service Improvement Plan and Enhanced Partnership Plan with that of the (LCWIP) the Council can ensure direct and convenient points of access to the bus network for people who walk and cycle and therefore enable bus travel to form part of longer journeys.

1.3.3 Complementary policies and legislation which also have an impact on residents' decision to travel by bus and the operation of bus services in the borough include:

- Traffic Management Policies
- Car Parking Plans and Policies
- Traffic Management Act 2004

## 1.4 Challenges and Opportunities for Bus Travel

### 1.4.1 These are grouped into four categories and are set out below:

Challenges	Opportunities
<b>Pandemic and economic recovery</b>	
Inflation from driver and fuel cost increases with driver costs the highest outside of London. This is increasing costs of services and making viability more difficult.	Passenger demand returns and stabilises after the pandemic with services returning to pre pandemic levels
Changes in travel patterns post pandemic, with more people working from home. The Borough has a high proportion of professionals who can work from home 2-3 days per week. This reduces peak hour travel demand, bus travel, and reduced fares income.	The BSIP presents an opportunity to reconsider the current public transport provision and how the network can be revised and simplified to better meet the needs of existing and future communities.
	Through the Customer Charter and the annual review of the BSIP, bus passengers in the Borough will be given more of a voice in the way that local bus services are delivered.
<b>Travel choices and alternatives</b>	
The cost of travel and journey times for rail passengers is increased by poor accessibility to local stations. The lack of seamless ticketing and through fares between bus services and between bus and rail (other than the PlusBus offer which is not sufficiently comprehensive).	Potential to develop more integrated inter-operable ticketing schemes, although there is already a joint Reading and Wokingham area travel card.
Some corridors and local routes have low frequency which is not sufficiently attractive to non-public transport users or occasional users.	Increases in fuel costs, cars and general cost of living will increase the attractiveness of buses.
The rise of Uber and other private hire schemes can compete with bus fares especially if in a shared vehicle	An increase in the Borough's parking charges will make bus travel more price competitive.
By providing segregated cycle routes in line with LTN 1/20, road space may be allocated to cycles in preference to bus lanes. The Council will need to carefully consider the use of road space for local bus services and balance the needs of all road users.	Providing bus priority measures to reduce journey times and variations in times will make buses more efficient and attractive.
	By coordinating the approach of the BSIP with the Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP), the Council can ensure direct and convenient points of access to the bus network for people who walk

	and cycle, allowing active travel to form parts of longer multi-modal journeys utilising the bus network.
<b>Carbonisation and air quality</b>	
Lack of availability of a clean and quiet bus rolling stock, which is largely assumed to be e-buses. There are practical operational challenges with using e-buses, associated with limited range, charging points, long order times and high capital prices. Initially there is most potential for P & R services where they can recharge and smaller buses.	Supporting operators to migrate to electric vehicles is an opportunity to improve outcomes of the Air Quality Action Plan.
Lack of e-bus charging locations, either on the journey or at the depots.	Increased bus usage is an important component of the Borough Air Quality Action Plan and Climate Change Emergency Plan.
Walking for short trips and cycling for longer ones are being encouraged and becoming more attractive as the cycle network expands. E-bikes in particular offer an excellent way to travel the equivalent distance by bus.	Expanding the success of the My Journey programme to target other areas of the Borough and replicate the successes of pre-pandemic bus travel.
Bus emissions from diesel vehicles negatively impact air quality, which presents a particular challenge for buses, with the stop-start nature of bus services.	
<b>Future growth and sustainable communities</b>	
High levels of car ownership and lack of regular bus services, especially in the lower density areas, means that buses are not attractive to car drivers.	Connecting to new demand from the Strategic Development Locations at the south of M4, Arborfield, South Wokingham and North Wokingham.
New housing areas are not always able to provide frequent and reliable bus services. This is in part due to some areas being relatively low density with high car ownership and 2 parking spaces per dwelling.	Potential to improve accessibility to lower density and rural areas.
Population growth is expected to be greatest amongst the over 85 age group, as residents live longer and are active for longer. With more residents becoming eligible for concessionary bus travel this presents increasing financial pressure for the Council through increased concessionary fare payments.	With more residents becoming eligible for concessionary travel, passenger trips will increase.
	Hospital shuttle Park and Ride bus has the potential to be developed into a local bus service.
	Continued house building and new home occupations have the potential to change behaviours and increase bus travel.

## 1.5 Overview of Local Bus Network

### 1.5.1 Bus operators providing local bus services within Wokingham Borough are:

- **Reading Buses** (part of Reading Transport, an arm's length company owned by Reading Borough Council) are the largest operator within the borough. Reading Buses operate mainly commercial and some financially supported local bus services. Reading Buses operate services on all key corridors as well as in the urban areas of Earley and Woodley.
- **Thames Valley Buses** (part of Reading Transport) only operate local bus services which are financially supported by Wokingham Borough Council. Most local bus services operated by Thames Valley Buses are in and around the Town of Wokingham, with the one exception of the interurban service between Wokingham Town, Winnersh, Twyford, Charvil, Sonning, Woodley and Reading.
- **Carousel , (part of GoAhead )** provides one interurban local bus service on the A4/A321 corridor between High Wycombe via Henley and Twyford to Reading. The Carousel service is commercially operated.
- **Horseman Coaches** operate three registered school bus routes and three 'weekly shopper' local bus services. Each of the 'weekly shopper' local bus services offer one return trip on one day each week from rural villages. All routes operated by Horseman Coaches receive financial support from Wokingham Borough Council.
- **Stagecoach South** operate one commercial school bus route into Hampshire.

Furthermore, although not registered as a local bus service:

- **Stewarts Coaches** operate a shuttle service from Reading to the Thames Valley Park business park.

### 1.5.2 A summary of the services operated by each local bus operator within the borough are provided in Table EP1-1.

Table EP 1-1 – Local Bus Operators and Local Bus Services

Local bus operator	Registered address	2024 Local bus routes operated (‘open door’ school bus routes shown in red)
Carousel (part of GoAhead)	Unit 2, Hughenden Avenue, High Wycombe, HP13 5SG	850
Horseman Coaches	2, Acre Road, Reading, RG2 0SU	145, 153, 154, 202, 244, 983
Reading Transport Limited (trading as Reading Buses)	Great Knollys Street, Reading, RG1 7H	3, 9, 9A, 4/4A, 13, 14, 19A, 19B, 19C 21, 21A, 300, 500, 600, 603, 650 50, 81, 701
Stagecoach (South) Limited	Bus Station, Basin Road, Chichester, PO19 8DG Depot address: Halimote Road, Aldershot, GU11 1NJ	406
Stewarts Coaches Limited	Headley Park Eight, Headley Road East, Woodley, Reading, RG5 4SA	Thames Valley Park shuttle (not registered as local bus route)
Thames Valley Buses Limited	Unit 3, Maple Centre, Downmill Road, Bracknell, RG12 1QS Depot address: 22 Ivanhoe Road, Hogwood Industrial Estate, Finchampstead, Wokingham, RG40 4QQ	121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 125A, 125B 127, 128, 129, 151, 151A 194, 234, 235, 239



- 1.5.3 Across the network 1.3 million vehicle kilometres were operated in 2022/23, accommodating 2.2 million passenger journeys. Despite the decline in vehicle kilometres from the previous year, the increase in number of passenger trips suggests a healthy increase in average vehicle loadings in the borough, resulting in an efficient operation. This trend has also been observed in the neighbouring borough of Reading. Of the 2.2 million passenger journeys, 19.2% were made using a concessionary pass. This is about the same as the national average (19%), and lower than the South East average (22.8%)
- 1.5.4 Up until the first quarter of 2020, Wokingham Borough saw a steady increase in bus service demand and supply, with an approximate 23% increase in journeys per head of population between 2010 and 2020. In contrast journeys per head of population have fallen in England in the same period. Since 2021 journeys per head of population have increased again but not returning to pre 2020 levels.

## **1.6 Bus Passenger's Priorities for Improvement**

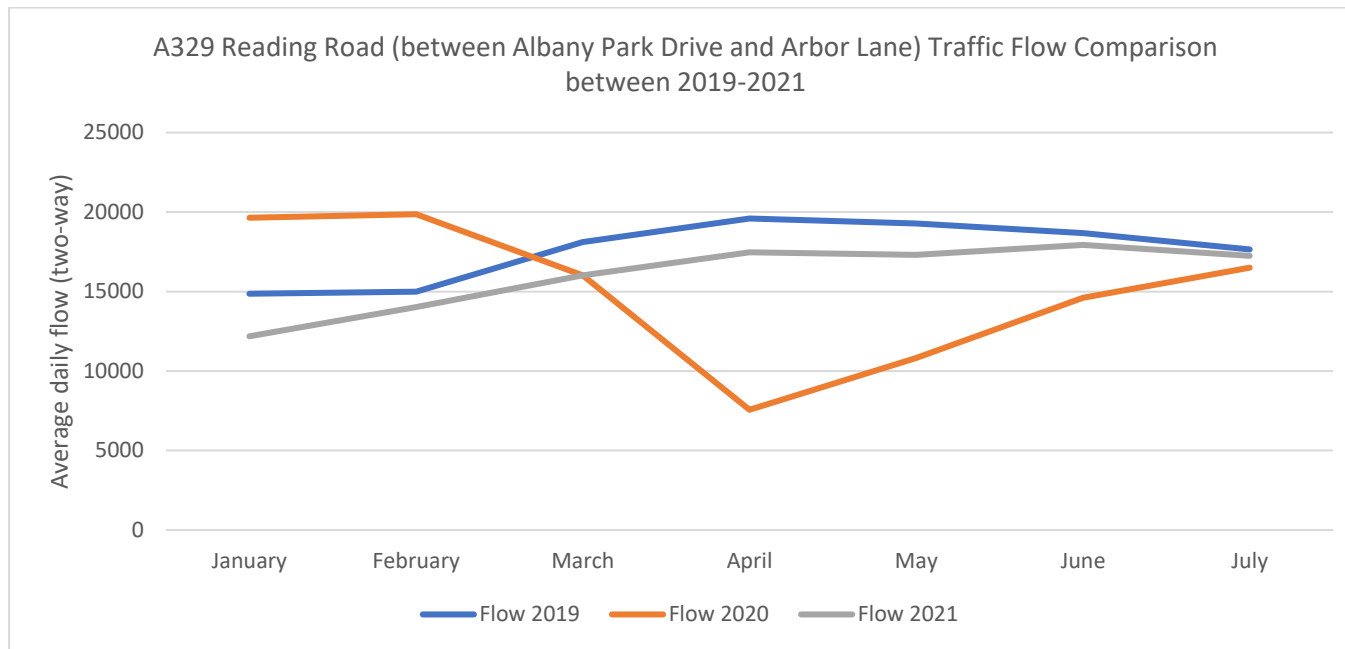
- 1.6.1 The National Highways and Transport (NHT) Survey asks a randomly selected sample of Wokingham Borough residents their satisfaction levels with local bus services. The NHT survey extends to both bus users and non-bus users in the borough. In Wokingham borough 59% of residents reported being satisfied with 'Local bus services (overall)' compared to 55% nationally. The only two categories which scored below 50% of residents being satisfaction were 'Public transport information'(46%) and 'Information about accessible buses' (49%), which were both above national averages. Areas where satisfaction were more than 1% below the national average were:
- Taxi/mini cab services Punctuality of the bus.
  - The length of time waiting for the bus.
  - The information provided inside the bus.
  - The amount of personal space you had around you.

- 1.6.2 Engagement with Town and Parish Councils indicated that priorities for local Town and Parish Councils varied across the borough. Overall, Town and Parish Councils reported that they were most satisfied with safety on board the bus and the quality of the vehicles provided. Overall, Town and Parish Councils reported they were least satisfied with no bus services being provided in some areas, the cost of travel and buses not going where they are perceived to be needed. The main priorities for improvement were identified to be more direct services, more buses throughout the day and lower fares. All Town and Parish Council who responded to the survey were prepared to support the Borough Council with the promotion and publicity of local bus services.
- 1.6.3 More specifically targeted priorities which were identified by Town and Parish Councils included inequitable fares in some areas compared to others due to fare zone boundaries, better information being needed at bus stops especially for more complex bus services, and that bus services all tend to go to Reading but not always by the most direct route. More rural parishes identified priorities for better bus stop infrastructure and information, better links with stations and better bus service coverage in general. Electric buses for urban areas were also noted as a future ambition to help to tackle climate change.
- 1.6.4 Engagement with wider stakeholders revealed a high proportion of carers use local bus services, a quarter of whom travel at least once a week. Priorities for improvement for carers who do not use the bus were buses going where needed, at the right time and having quicker journey times. For carers who do use the bus, priorities for improvements were drivers having a better understanding of disabilities, more direct services, better information, and better waiting facilities. The Department for Work and Pensions indicated that bus services in Wokingham Borough provided good access to Reading and Bracknell job centres. Any improvements to bus services were recommended to focus on the timings of services for employment outside of non-standard office hours such as that of the hospitality industry.

## **1.7 Congestion and Journey Speeds**

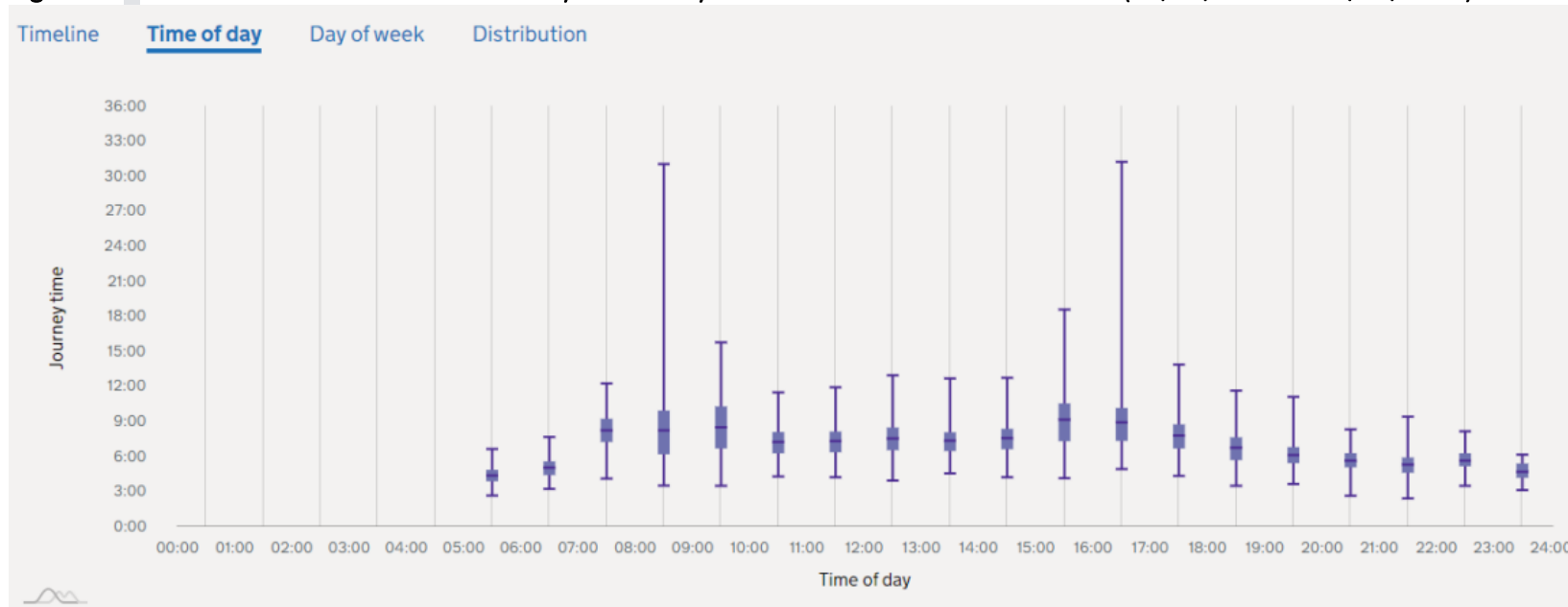
- 1.7.1 The variation in timetabled journey times provide a good indication of where bus services face daily challenges from slow traffic speeds or high passenger boardings. Using DfT Bus Open Data (BODS) analysis, Figure EP1.3 shows this for A329 corridor northbound for Reading Road.

Figure EP1-3 – Key Corridor Traffic Flows: A329 Reading Road



- 1.7.2 The profile shows longer journey times and ranges in time in the early morning peak and afternoon peak. Where bus journey times are extended due to slow traffic speeds bus priority measures are an effective way of providing quicker bus journey times.

Figure EP1-4 – Variation in Scheduled Journey Time Daily Profile on the A329 Northbound (01/01/2024 to 31/04/2024)



## **1.8 Reliability and Punctuality**

- 1.8.1 Knowing when and where a bus will arrive is fundamental to making local bus services attractive and convenient to use. In 2023 resident's satisfaction with local buses was measured as part of the National Highways and Transport (NHT) Survey. Wokingham Borough Council scored higher than the UK average for overall satisfaction with local bus services, at 59% compared the national average of 54%. Wokingham's highest score is in Provision of bus stops at 87%, ranking 31st out of 111 authorities. The borough's lowest score is Public transport information at 46%, however this is still 13% above the national average of 33%, and Wokingham ranked 8th. Wokingham rank's lowest for Taxi/mini cab services, at 86th, earning a score of 57% compared to the national average of 60%. Overall Wokingham Borough was ranked 18th out of 111 authorities.
- 1.8.2 Bus punctuality levels vary greatly by service. The longest routes tend to experience the highest risk of poor punctuality, whilst the shorter town link routes have a much lower risk of poor punctuality.
- 1.8.3 Roadworks and the coordination of roadworks can have a significant effect on punctuality of local bus services. Feedback from local bus operators indicates that the council is not always doing well in keeping them informed of when and where roadworks take place in the Borough. For corridor and cross-boundary services a coordinated approach with neighbouring Councils to ensure these longer services are not subject to several sets of delays would further improve bus punctuality during roadworks.

## **1.9 Enhanced Partnership Plan Outcomes**

- 1.9.1 Wokingham's Enhanced Partnership Plan aims to achieve the following outcomes / objectives to improve local bus services:
- Objective 1: Grow passenger numbers to pre-pandemic levels and to continue to strive for growth.
  - Objective 2: Return bus services to pre-pandemic levels, improve levels of service and extend to new areas of travel demand.
  - Objective 3: Improve accessibility to transport services and the local bus network for communities in more rural and low-density areas.
  - Objective 4: Improve bus journey times, reliability and punctuality along key transport corridors.
  - Objective 5: Make fares affordable and simpler.
  - Objective 6: Deliver a greener bus network by reducing carbon emissions and provide residents with attractive, comfortable, modern and greener travel alternatives.

- Objective 7: Improve bus integration with rail passengers, cyclists, pedestrians and car drivers.
- Objective 8: Improve passenger engagement and satisfaction of bus services.
- Objective 9: Ensure bus travel is a safe means of transport.

1.9.2 Interventions and proposals that will be jointly delivered by Wokingham Borough Council and local bus operators to achieve the outcomes are listed below by each objective. There are 22 proposals identified and the detailed actions for these are set out in the BSIP 2024.

- **More frequent services and expanding the network coverage.** The first main group of proposals focuses on the National Bus Strategy objective for more frequent services which are summarised in Table 4.1.

Bus services in rural areas are generally infrequent and limit accessibility for many residents, which creates barriers for residents relying on public transport including adults with enhanced needs and care leavers. In the north and the east of the Borough this is a particular problem. There are similar rural and low-density areas in nearby authorities such as Windsor & Maidenhead, West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest. The Council has discussed with neighbouring authorities the potential for a joint Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) operation, subject to suitable funding being made available. By sharing resources such as control centre, software and reservations process it may be more cost-effective.

- Proposal 1: Review and increase service frequency and network coverage on key corridors.
  - Proposal 2: Review and improve service frequency to urban areas of Earley, Woodley, Wokingham Town and new development areas.
  - Proposal 3: Improve service quality, accessibility and network coverage in low density areas.
  - Proposal 4: Accessible and inclusive bus services for all
- **Bus priority: delivering faster and more reliable services on priority routes/corridors.** Bus priority is an important part of the strategy and Table 4.2 lists the proposed actions to deliver:
    - Proposal 5: Increase bus priority measures on key corridors. Identify bus priority that includes additional bus lanes, bus gates and traffic signal priority along the key corridors.

- **Make fares affordable and simpler.** Lower fares will attract more passengers. Fares currently in the area are reckoned to be reasonable and given the inflationary pressures in the industry, even retaining at existing levels is an achievement. The national £2 fares cap has helped considerably. In terms of having consistent fares and fares structures a dominant operator is helpful. Some of the proposals are relying on the Reading BC BSIP which is applying subsidies to the 'simply Reading' zone. These include parts of Wokingham that cover the University, Woodley, Earley, Mere oak P & R and Sonning. The proposals are as follows:
  - Proposal 6: Keep fares at an affordable level and reduce where possible.
  - Proposal 7: Simplify fares.
  - Proposal 8: Integrate ticketing between operators and other sustainable modes.
  
- **Deliver a greener bus network by reducing carbon emissions and provide residents with attractive greener travel alternatives.** A clean and green bus fleet is essential for the network. Much of the funding for this is done via the Zero Emission Bus Regional Areas Scheme 9 (ZEBRAS) which includes grants for the rolling stock and charging infrastructure. The proposal is:
  - Proposal 9: Invest in improved bus vehicles and transition buses to zero carbon.
  
- **Improve bus integration with rail passengers, cyclists, pedestrians and car drivers.** Greater integration of buses with all other modes of transport is an important aspect of delivering a seamless public transport network. The Borough has done much work in recent years on the Park and Ride sites and includes the new one at Coppid Beech. The Borough has done much work in recent years on the Park and Ride sites and includes the new one at Coppid Beech. Demand for them has reduced, but it is returning slowly and more flexible ways of using the sites is being identified. The borough is also looking to develop a differential car parking charging system which should result in greater demand at the P & R sites. The proposals split by mode are as follows:
  - Proposal 10: Provide high quality and comfortable waiting facilities at bus stops.
  - Proposal 11: Integrate with walking and cycling networks
  - Proposal 12: Integrate with the rail network.
  - Proposal 13: Continue to develop the Park & Ride sites so they become effective transport interchanges and hubs.
  
- **Improve passenger information, engagement, identity and branding.** There are several groups and organisations in the Borough that are consulted on regarding any proposed changes to bus services. These include community groups in Earley and Woodley and a number of

parish councils, but there is no overarching representation of bus users. There are a series of proposals including a charter and a user group, which should help to involve the public to a greater extent in services. The proposals are as follows:

- Proposal 14: Strengthen network identity
  - Proposal 15: Improve passenger information
  - Proposal 16: Develop and progress the Passenger Charter
- **Access and safety:** The safety of passenger and that they feel safe and secure is essential. Objective 9 states: Ensure bus travel is a safe means of transport. The proposals are as follows:
- Proposal 17: Protect the personal safety of bus passengers.
  - Proposal 18: Minimise highway accidents involving buses.
- **Longer term proposals.** There are a number of longer-term bus enhancement projects that the council would like to pursue and deliver to help have a transformational impact on bus usage. The proposals are:
- Proposal 19: Investigate, plan and deliver the A329M Transit Corridor
  - Proposal 20: Ensure high quality bus services at new development in the Emerging Local Plan
  - Proposal 21: Investigate, trial and deliver driverless buses
  - Proposal 22: Investigate and develop Mobility as a Service (MaaS) for the wider Thames Valley

1.9.3 The key corridors are defined as:

- **A329 Corridor** – Bracknell – Wokingham – Winnersh – Reading
- **A329m Corridor** – Winnersh Triangle – Reading
- **A33 Corridor** – Spencers Wood – Three Mile Cross and Reading
- **A4 / A321 Corridor** – Henley / Wokingham – Twyford – Sonning – Reading
- **A327 Corridor** – Wokingham – Finchampstead – Arborfield/Spencers Wood – Shinfield – Reading
- **New corridor** – Spencers Wood Shinfield – Winnersh – Twyford



1.9.4 The urban areas are defined as:

- **Earley / Lower Earley / Maiden Erlegh Area**
- **Woodley and North Earley**
- **Wokingham Town and the surrounding areas** – including the communities of Emmbrook, Woosehill, the Norreys Estate, Easthampstead, Finchampstead and Barkham.

1.9.5 The rural and low-density areas are defined as:

- **North Parishes** – including Wargrave, Remenham, Sonning and Charvil
- **Eastern Parishes** – Hurst and Ruscombe
- **Southern Parishes** – including Spencers Wood, Swallowfield, Riseley and Finchampstead Village

## 1.10 Funding Arrangements

1.10.1 To deliver the 22 proposals set out above, the cost is estimated to be in excess of £139m. The above improvements cannot be delivered without appropriate funding from central government, which is not currently available although BSIP allocations have been received of £800,000 across 2023/24 and 2024/25 and £1,298,000 in 2025/26. It is because the patronage gained from the measures would not be derived over a reasonable enough period for purely commercial payback, and some of the environmental gains do not derive a commercial payback for bus operators. Significant DfT funding has also been allocated to Reading Borough Council, with much of Wokingham in the Reading Journey to Work Area and we remain optimistic that further funding will be made available in the future. In the meantime, we will consider the limited funding the Council has available and work with partners to bid for any appropriate funding that maybe available.

- 1.10.2 In 2022/23 Wokingham Borough Council provided £870,010 of funding towards local bus services from LTA's own resources (including S106, council tax etc) and other funding sources such as the Local Government Finance Settlement and Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG). Inflationary pressures, the impact of changing travel patterns and a slow recovery in concessionary passengers has increased the cost of local bus services whilst passenger revenues have fallen. Due to the importance placed on maintaining local bus services, the Council's Executive Committee agreed to £350,000 of budget growth from 2023/2024, in addition to the release of £450,000 per year of S106 funding for the three financial years up until 2026/2027.
- 1.10.3 Other funding which the Council provides towards the operation of local transport services or because of revenue forgone includes:
- Just under £800,000 on English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS) for the reimbursement of travel. This support includes discretionary elements of the scheme which include travel on Park & Ride services, travel from 9am, companion travel for those with disability passes and travel to medical appointments on community and volunteer transport services.
  - Just over £100,000 per year in financial support for community transport and volunteer transport services. These services provide a pre bookable dial-a-ride option for residents who struggle to access conventional bus service. This support is alongside adult social care funding for transport services.
- 1.10.4 £14.9 million has been committed for the construction and expansion of park and ride sites in the borough. Approximately £9.5 million of the funding has been secured from the Local Enterprise Partnership.

## **1.11 Governance Arrangements**

- 1.11.1 The Enhanced Partnership has been made following engagement with local bus, community transport operators, voluntary transport operators, rail operators, neighbouring authorities and Towns and Parish Councils. Consultation has been carried out with local bus operators, neighbouring authorities, the Local Enterprise Partnership, the Chief of Police and the Traffic Commissioner.
- 1.11.2 Section 5 of EP Scheme 1 sets out the governance arrangements for the Enhanced Partnership.
- 1.11.3 If variations to the EP Scheme are required, this will be undertaken in accordance with Section 5.4 of the EP Scheme.

## **1.12 Monitoring and Consultation**

- 1.12.1 Local bus operators will be consulted regularly on the progress of the EP Plan and EP Scheme(s). The EP Forum will allow key stakeholders to monitor the progress of the Enhanced Partnership. Community working groups maybe set up within the community and provide feedback to Transport Officers on how well the EP Plan and EP Scheme(s) are working.

## **PART 2 – ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP SCHEME 1**

### **1 EP Scheme Content**

- 1.1.1 This document fulfils the statutory requirements set out by the Bus Services Act 2017 for an Enhanced Partnership (EP) Scheme. In accordance with statutory requirements in section 138G(1) of the Transport Act 2000, the EP Scheme document sets out:
- Section 2 – Scope of the EP Scheme and commencement date
  - Section 3 – Obligations on the Local Authorities
  - Section 4 – Obligations on Bus Operators
  - Section 5 – Governance Arrangements
  - Section 6 – Dispute and Resolution Arrangements
- 1.1.2 The EP Scheme can only be put in place if an associated EP Plan has been made. Therefore, this document should be considered alongside Wokingham’s Enhanced Partnership Plan.
- 1.1.3 The EP Scheme has been jointly developed by Wokingham Borough Council which is the Local Planning and Highway Authority and those bus operators that provide local bus services in the EP Scheme Area. It sets out obligations and requirements on both Wokingham Borough Council and local bus operators to achieve the intended improvements, with the aim of delivering the objectives of Wokingham’s EP Plan.
- 1.1.4 The objectives of the EP Plan are:
1. Grow passenger numbers to pre-pandemic levels and to strive for growth.
  2. Return bus services to pre-pandemic levels, improve levels of service and extend to new areas of travel demand.
  3. Improve accessibility to transport services and the local bus network for communities in more rural and low-density areas.
  4. Improve bus journey times, reliability and punctuality along key transport corridors.
  5. Make fares affordable and simpler.
  6. Deliver a greener bus network by reducing carbon emissions and provide residents with attractive, comfortable, modern and greener travel alternatives.

7. Improve bus integration with rail passengers, cyclists, pedestrians and car drivers.
8. Improve passenger engagement and satisfaction of bus services.
9. Ensure bus travel is a safe means of transport.

## 2 Scope of the EP Scheme and Commencement Date

### 2.1 Scope of the EP Scheme

2.1.1 The Enhanced Partnership Plan and Enhanced Partnership Scheme 1.2 cover the full extent of Wokingham Borough.

2.1.2 The EP Scheme will support the improvement of all qualifying local bus services operating within Wokingham Borough (Section 2.3). Exempt services are listed in 2.3.1.

2.1.3 The EP Scheme 1.2 will support the delivery of the EP Plan objectives across the following corridors, urban areas, and rural / low-density areas:

a) EP Scheme Corridors:

- i. **A329 Corridor** – Bracknell – Wokingham – Winnersh – Reading
- ii. **A329m Corridor** – Winnersh Triangle – Reading
- iii. **A33 Corridor** – Spencers Wood – Three Mile Cross and Reading
- iv. **A4 / A321 Corridor** – Henley / Wokingham – Twyford – Sonning – Reading
- v. **A327 Corridor** – Wokingham – Finchampstead – Arborfield/Spencers Wood – Shinfield – Reading
- vi. **New corridor** – Spencers Wood Shinfield – Winnersh – Twyford

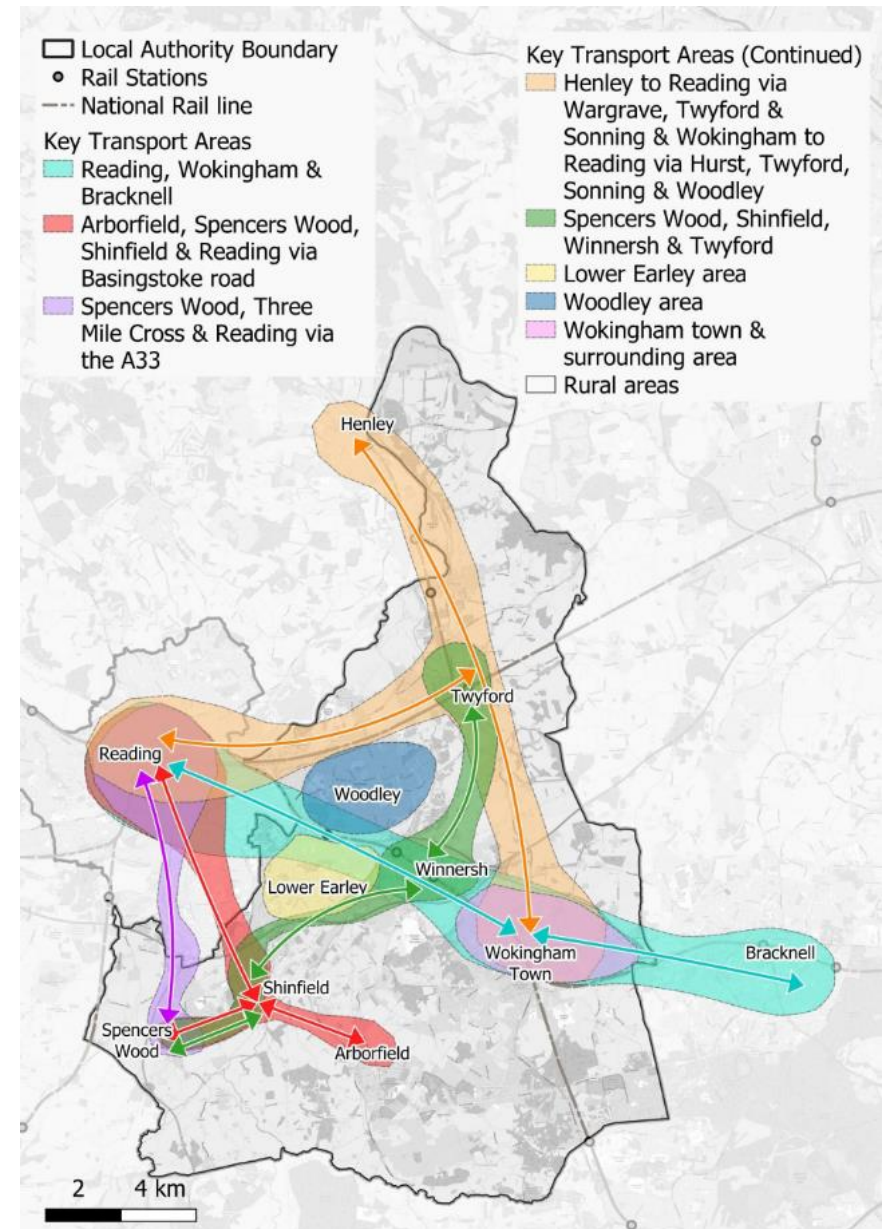
b) EP Scheme Urban areas:

- i. **Earley / Lower Earley / Maiden Erlegh Area**
- ii. **Woodley and North Earley**
- iii. **Wokingham Town and the surrounding areas** – including the communities of Emmbrook, Woosehill, the Norreys Estate, Easthampstead, Finchampstead and Barkham.

- c) EP Scheme Rural and Low-Density areas:
  - i. **North Parishes** – including Wargrave, Remenham, Sonning and Charvil
  - ii. **Eastern Parishes** – Hurst and Ruscombe
  - iii. **Southern Parishes** – including Spencers Wood, Swallowfield, Riseley and Finchampstead Village.

2.1.4 Taken together the key corridors, urban areas, and rural / low-density areas cover the full extent of Wokingham Borough, as shown in Figure ES1.1.

Figure ES1.1 – Enhanced Partnership Scheme Area



## 2.2 Commencement Date

- 2.2.1 The EP Plan and EP Scheme 1 were made on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2023. The EP Plan has no end date but will be reviewed every five years from the commencement date. The EP Scheme started 70 days after it was made, with subsequent milestone dates by which certain facilities and measures (Section 3) and bus service operator obligations will be introduced (Section 4). The EP Scheme has no specific end date but has been reviewed by Wokingham Borough Council in June 2025 and will be reviewed in future years by the anniversary of the EP in each year (30<sup>th</sup> September) (see Section 5).

The first review of the EP Scheme was completed and published in October 2024, resulting in changes to the Plan and Scheme. These changes make the EP Plan and Scheme consistent with the 2024 BSIP Update. Key changes include updated objectives for the BSIP, the most recently available data and the inclusion of a new key corridor (Spencers Wood Shinfield – Winnersh – Twyford).

## 2.3 Exempted Services

- 2.3.1 Registered Local Bus Services with one or more stopping places within the EP Scheme area are classed as ‘qualifying local bus services’, except those with locally agreed exemptions, as set out below:
- i. Services run under section 89 to 91 of the Transport Act 1985 where the service operates at school times only and the intended purpose is to solely serve an educational establishment.
  - ii. Registered local services that are excursions or tours.
  - iii. Services operated under Section 22 of the Transport Act 1985 (community bus services).
  - iv. Services operated under Section 19 of the Transport Act 1985 (not for profit services).
  - v. Services that have 10% or less of their overall distance registered as local bus services.
  - vi. Services operated by vehicles that by law do not permit standing.
- 2.3.2 Any amendments to Section 2.3 will be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

### 3 Obligations on the Authorities

#### 3.1 Summary of obligations on authorities

3.1.1 The following table summarises the specific interventions that Wokingham Borough Council will deliver as part of the EP Scheme.

**Table ES1.1 – Summary of Existing Facilities and Measures**

<b>Facilities <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>EPS Section</b>
Existing Bus Priority Facilities	3.2
Existing Bus Stops	3.3
Existing Bus Shelters	3.4
Existing Real Time Passenger Information Screens	3.5
Existing Park and Ride Sites	3.6
My Journey Website	3.7
<b>Measures <sup>2</sup></b>	<b>EPS Section</b>
Local Authority Mechanisms and Procedures	3.13
Managing roadworks in the EP Scheme Area	3.14
Marketing and Promotion of Local Bus Services in the EP Scheme Area	3.15
Procurement of Contracted Services to the Benefit of the Passenger	3.16
Consultation on Appropriate Traffic Management Measures	3.17
External Funding Bids	3.18
Planning Consultation	3.19

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<sup>1</sup> Provided under s.138D(1) of the Transport Act 2000

<sup>2</sup> Provided under s.138D(1) of the Transport Act 2000



Wokingham Borough Council will make provisions to allow the variation of the Enhanced Partnership Scheme so that Wokingham Borough can provide the Facilities and Measures summarised in Table ES1.2, subject to funding and feasibility:

<b>Facilities<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>EPS Section</b>
New Bus Priority Facilities	3.8
New Bus Stops in Development Areas	3.9
New Bus Stops outside Development Areas	3.10
New Real Time Passenger Information Screens	3.11
New Park and Ride Sites	3.12
<b>Measures<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>EPS Section</b>
Bus Lane and Junction Enforcement	3.20
Integration with other sustainable travel modes	3.21
Feasibility Studies	3.22
Bus Stop Audit	3.23
Branding	3.24
Passenger Charter	3.25
Pilot New Technology	3.26
Demand Responsive Transport	3.27

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<sup>3</sup> Provided under s.138D(1) of the Transport Act 2000

<sup>4</sup> Provided under s.138D(2) of the Transport Act 2000

### **3.2 Existing Bus Priority Facilities**

- 3.2.1 Wokingham Borough Council will provide and maintain the list of existing bus priority facilities described in Table A1 of Annex A.
- 3.2.2 Bus priority facilities may be removed from or amended in Annex A by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

### **3.3 Existing Bus Stops**

- 3.3.1 Wokingham Borough Council will provide bus stops at the locations registered on the National bus stop database ([NaPTAN - DfT](#)), with the exception of those stops which are designated as “hail and ride”. Bus stops are in three categories: Bronze with a post and flag only, Silver with and shelter added and Gold with Real Time Information (RTI) added.
- 3.3.2 Existing bus stops may be improved in accordance with the standards set out in Wokingham Borough Council’s Bus Stop Policy (July 2013) or any subsequent revision.

### **3.4 Existing Bus Shelters**

- 3.4.1 Bus shelters are provided in certain locations across the EP scheme area. Bus shelters are maintained in accordance with the adopted Bus Stop Policy (July 2013) or any subsequent revision.

### **3.5 Existing Real Time Passenger Information Screens**

- 3.5.1 Wokingham Borough Council will provide real time information screens at the locations listed in Table B1 of Annex B.
- 3.5.2 Existing real time information screens will form part of an on-going maintenance contract.

- 3.5.3 Where real time information screens are subject to damage beyond the scope of the maintenance contract, Wokingham Borough Council will replace the screens subject to available funding.
- 3.5.4 Annex B may be varied or replaced by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

### **3.6 Existing Park and Ride Sites & Operational Review**

- 3.6.1 Park and Ride sites are provided at Winnersh Triangle, Mere oak, Coppid Beech and Thames Valley Park. When the sites are operational, the maintenance and operation of these sites will be undertaken in accordance with the appropriate site-specific management agreement.
- 3.6.2 Any amendments to the operation and maintenance of Park and Ride sites, will be made using a bespoke variation under the powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000, by a revised copy of the management agreement, or an equivalent document, being distributed to all local operators who serve the park and ride site at that time. If no objections are received within 14 calendar days, clauses 3.6.1, may be varied or replaced. If an objection is received, the Council will try to resolve the objection with the operator, if this is not possible the amendment will then be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

### **3.7 My Journey Website**

- 3.7.1 Wokingham Borough Council will continue to provide information on local bus services and school bus services on the My Journey website.
- 3.7.2 Wokingham Borough Council will maintain the website throughout the EP Scheme. Timetable, route, and fare information will be updated ahead of each new academic year in September or on receipt of any notification provided by an operator to Wokingham Borough Council via [www.myjourneywokingham.com](http://www.myjourneywokingham.com).

- 3.7.3 Any Operator may object to the posting of information on the My Journey website by e-mailing [myjourney@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:myjourney@wokingham.gov.uk). Should any objections be received, the information will be removed within 5 working days at the discretion of Wokingham Borough Council. Any Operator may raise any further objections by activating the dispute mechanism in Section 6.
- 3.7.4 Section 3.7 may be varied by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.
- 3.8 New Bus Priority Facilities**
- 3.8.1 New bus priority facilities can be added to the list at Annex A by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.
- 3.8.2 All operators running local bus services along any part of the corridor that would be subject to the new bus priority can object to the proposals. Those proposals will only go ahead if no objections are received within the specified objection period. If an objection is received, the Council will try to resolve the objection with the operator, if this is not possible the amendment will then be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.
- 3.9 New Bus Stops in Development Areas**
- 3.9.1 Wokingham Borough Council will install or upgrade, or oversee the installation or upgrading of, any new bus stops in areas of new development, in accordance with any agreed planning obligations.
- 3.9.2 Bus stops in new development areas will be added to the NaPTAN database.
- 3.9.3 All operators running local bus services which would be affected by the introduction of new bus stops can object to the proposals within the terms of any associated planning permission. Proposal will only go ahead in accordance with an appropriate planning permission.

### **3.10 New Bus Stops Outside Development Areas**

- 3.10.1 Wokingham Borough Council may install bus stop infrastructure across the EP Scheme Area. Any new bus stops outside development areas will be added to the NaPTAN database.
- 3.10.2 All operators running local bus services which would be affected by the introduction of new bus stops will be provided with a copy of any proposal to introduce new stops outside of developments areas. Those proposals will only go ahead if no objections are received within the proposal's specified objection period. If an objection is received, the Council will try to resolve the objection with the operator, if this is not possible the amendment will then be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

### **3.11 New Real Time Passenger Information Screens**

- 3.11.1 Wokingham Borough Council may install additional real-time passenger information screens across the EP Scheme Area. The initial list of locations is included in Annex B.
- 3.11.2 Any additional real-time information screens will be reflected in a revised copy of Annex B which will be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below. All operators running local bus services which would be affected by the introduction of new Real Time Passenger Information screens will be provide with a copy of any proposal to introduce new screen on the network. Those proposals will only go ahead if no objections are received within the proposals specified objection period. If an objection is received, the Council will try to resolve the objection with the operator, if this is not possible the amendment will then be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

### **3.12 New Park and Ride Sites**

- 3.12.1 Wokingham Borough Council may bring into operation new Park and Ride sites within the borough at an appropriate time as it sees fit.
- 3.12.2 Prior to bringing any new park and ride site into operation appropriate documentation will be distributed to all operators who have a registered local bus service which runs into or out of the new Park and Ride. Clause 3.6.1 will be varied under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 using the Enhanced Partnership Scheme bespoke variation arrangements. All operators who have a registered a local bus service which will run into or out of the new Park and Ride site can object to the proposals. Those proposals will only go ahead if no objections are received within the specified objection period. If an objection is received, the Council will try to resolve the objection with the operator, if this is not possible the amendment will then be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

### **3.13 Local Authority Reporting Mechanisms and Procedures**

- 3.13.1 Annex C lists the service areas and contact email addresses in the borough that can be contacted as required. Should the email addresses or any other aspects of the reporting procedures included in Annex C change, Wokingham Borough Council will inform Operators at least 5 working days in advance of the change and Annex C will be updated.

### **3.14 Managing roadworks in the EP Scheme Area**

- 3.14.1 From 1<sup>st</sup> October 2023 Wokingham Borough Council will work collaboratively with all bus operators to minimise disruption to local bus services from both planned and emergency roadworks. This will include liaison with bus operators to ensure that the co-ordination of works across the network minimise disruption in the EP Scheme Area.
- 3.14.2 Wokingham Borough Council will ensure, as far as practical:
  - a) All road and street works are published on one.Network.

- b) Planned and unplanned road and street works are published on Wokingham Borough Council's Traffic and Travel Facebook and Twitter social media platforms.
- c) All local bus operators receive a formal notification of planned temporary Traffic Regulation Orders (TTRs) 21 days before works commence.
- d) All local bus operators receive notification of disruptive emergency works as soon as feasibly possible.
- e) All local bus operators receive a bespoke list of major and disruptive works at least once a month.
- f) All works are planned in coordination with neighbouring local authorities.

3.14.3 Any amendments to Section 3.14 will be made under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below. Any Operator may object to the amendment of Section 3.14 by e-mailing [myjourney@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:myjourney@wokingham.gov.uk). If an objection is received, the Council will try to resolve the objection with the operator. If this is not possible the amendment will then be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

### **3.15 Marketing and Promotion of Local Bus Services in the EP Scheme Area**

3.15.1 Wokingham Borough Council will actively promote bus travel in the EP Scheme Area. Promotion will include social media promotion, information on the My Journey website and the production of a network map across the whole EP Scheme Area. A network map will be refreshed at least once a year, which will usually be ahead of the new academic year each September.

3.15.2 Any amendments to Section 3.15 will be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

### **3.16 Procurement of Contracted Services to the Benefit of the Passenger**

- 3.16.1 Where appropriate Wokingham Borough Council will tender for local bus services to meet local need which is unmet by commercial services.
- 3.16.2 Any services procured after the making of the EP Scheme, which are not subject to Section 2.3 (Exempted Services), must comply with the scheme requirements.

### **3.17 Consult on Appropriate Traffic Management Measures**

- 3.17.1 Where appropriate Wokingham Borough Council will consult on appropriate traffic management measures which will benefit bus travel.
- 3.17.2 Wokingham Borough Council will work with Operators to identify appropriate traffic management measures for consultation and where these are agreed upon, they will be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below, subject to the approval of an appropriate Traffic Regulation Order. Operators may object to proposals for traffic management measures through the Traffic Regulation Order process.
- 3.17.3 Any amendments to Section 3.17 will be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

### **3.18 External Funding Bids**

- 3.18.1 Wokingham Borough Council will, in partnership with Operators, submit bids to relevant Government competition funding sources to seek external contributions towards Enhanced Partnership ambitions in the EP Scheme Area. Wokingham Borough Council will work with Operators to identify and pursue other funding sources where appropriate.



### **3.19 Planning Consultation**

- 3.19.1 Wokingham Borough Council will ensure Operators are informed of significant planning applications for developments where public transport will be a consideration (for example large residential and commercial sites). The Borough Council will consult all Bus Operators running existing bus services at the time of consultation who are likely to be impacted by the development.
- 3.19.2 Wokingham Borough Council will secure appropriate planning contributions through S106 agreements, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or other appropriate means to ensure appropriate local bus service provision and appropriate bus infrastructure can be provided.
- 3.19.3 For proposed residential developments Wokingham Borough Council will request a My Journey contribution to support the promotion and marketing of all bus services. For proposed developments of a qualifying size, as set out in government planning guidance, and where a My Journey contribution has not been secured, Wokingham Borough Council will request a travel plan in line with Wokingham Borough Council's Travel Plan Guidance.

### **3.20 Bus Lane and Junction Enforcement**

- 3.20.1 Wokingham Borough Council may apply to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal Service, or any subsequent organisation which assumes these powers, for permission to set-up bus lane and junction enforcement along with a suitable appeals process. Where these permissions are granted Section 3.20 may be varied or amended under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below to reflect the granted permission. All Operators of qualifying local bus services will be notified within 28 days of receiving any such permissions.
- 3.20.2 Operators may object to any application of bus lane and junction enforcement through the statutory Traffic Regulation Order process associated with any bus lane or junction in which the granted permission is applied.

### **3.21 Integration with other Sustainable Travel Modes**

- 3.21.1 Wokingham Borough Council will use any suitable and available funding, following successful funding bids, to undertake appropriate feasibility, design, and project delivery work to improve the connectivity of local bus services with other sustainable modes of travel, namely local train stations, the wider cycle network, local footpaths and park and ride sites.
- 3.21.2 Any feasibility, design, and project delivery work to improve the connectivity of local bus services with other sustainable modes of travel, will be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below or notification to Operators who will be affected by the proposal or the statutory objection mechanism as set out in The Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018, as appropriate to the scale and nature of the works.

### **3.22 Feasibility Studies**

- 3.22.1 Wokingham Borough Council will use any suitable and available funding, following successful funding bids, to undertake appropriate feasibility studies to improve the efficiency and attractiveness of bus travel in the EP Scheme Area. Wokingham Borough Council will, in partnership with Operators bid for appropriate funding for feasibility studies relating to bus priority measures, long-term local bus network improvements, park and ride network improvements, park and ride capacity studies and demand responsive transport studies. Any feasibility studies, for which funding is secured, will be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

### **3.23 Bus Stop Audit**

- 3.23.1 Wokingham Borough Council will use any suitable and available funding, following successful funding bids, to carry out an on-site audit of all bus stops in Wokingham Borough and develop a prioritised list of bus stop infrastructure improvements which brings bus stop standards in line with Wokingham Borough Council's adopted bus stop policy. Any programme for improving bus stop infrastructure will be implemented under the relevant clauses.

### **3.24 Branding**

- 3.24.1 Wokingham Borough Council will use any suitable and available funding, following successful funding bids, to review the branding of travel in Wokingham Borough and make greater use of Park and Ride branding. The detailed specification of any branding projects will be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

### **3.25 Passenger Charter**

- 3.25.1 Wokingham Borough Council with bus operators are to produce a bus passenger charter to give passengers more confidence with the service that is provided. The passenger charter is being developed alongside the EP.

### **3.26 Pilot New Technology**

- 3.26.1 Wokingham Borough Council will use any suitable and available funding, following successful funding bids, to pilot new technology, which may include zero emission buses, to enhance the attractiveness and efficiency of the bus network. The detailed specification of any pilot projects will be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

### **3.27 Demand Responsive Transport**

- 3.27.1 Wokingham Borough Council will consider the implementation of demand responsive transport to improve accessibility and flexibility of transport networks in rural areas, subject to funding being available. The detailed specification of any pilot projects will be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below or through the statutory objection mechanism as set out in The Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018, as appropriate to the scale and nature of the provision.

## 4 Obligations on Local Bus Operators <sup>5</sup>

### 4.1 Vehicle standards

- 4.1.1 Vehicles used on qualifying local bus services will be required to meet specific standards depending on when the route was introduced.
- 4.1.2 For vehicles operating on qualifying routes which were in place prior to the EP Scheme being made, the minimum specification, including Euro classification, should be the equivalent to or better than what was in place on the route on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022. Details of the minimum specification for vehicles on each route are included in Annex A.
- 4.1.3 The following minimum vehicle specification shall apply to all new local bus service registrations commencing after 29<sup>th</sup> July 2025 and additionally to all vehicles used on qualifying bus services within the EP Scheme Area where the date of first registration falls after 29<sup>th</sup> July 2025:
  - a) All vehicles must be Euro VI (or equivalent standards) or better.
  - b) CCTV installed for safety and security. This should provide images inside the vehicle for safety and security and facing forwards from the vehicle.
  - c) AVL equipment installed that will feed into the Wokingham Borough Council's real time information system.
- 4.1.4 Operators must use any suitable and available funding, following successful agreed funding bids, to enhance vehicle standards in the EP Scheme Area. These criteria will be varied in future under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

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<sup>5</sup> Under s.138C of the Transport Act 2000

- 4.1.5 Where the Council engages with the operator in joint branding and or marketing of a route, the livery should where reasonably possible continue or be varied in future under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.
- 4.1.6 4.1.6 Operators must use any suitable and available funding, following successful agreed funding bids, to implement tap-on, tap-off technology in the EP Scheme Area. Any tap-on, tap-off technology will be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.
- 4.1.7 Any amendments to Section 4.1 will be made under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

## **4.2 Timetable changes**

- 4.2.1 Operators will be requested, where possible, to limit the number of timetable changes on all routes operating within the EP Scheme Area. The most significant timetable changes should be made for the start of each new academic year in September.

## **4.3 Ticketing**

- 4.3.1 Operators must use any suitable and available funding, following successful funding bids, to review ticket acceptance for travel in the EP Scheme Area, particularly for those aged 18 and under and in offering group tickets. Any new ticket acceptance schemes will be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

- 4.3.2 For all new local bus service registrations with more than four journeys a day, commencing after 29<sup>th</sup> July 2025, the following specification will apply in addition to that in Section 4.1.3:
- a. Option to pay for tickets through contactless payment.
  - b. Provide tap-on tap-off payment functionality
- 4.3.3 Operators who provide contactless or tap-on tap-off before 29<sup>th</sup> July 2025 must continue to provide it. Operators of new service registrations must provide these payment options within 3 months of the first day of operation.
- 4.4 Fares**
- 4.4.1 Operators must use any suitable and available funding, following agreed and successful funding bids, to provide a suitable and attractive young person's fare offer in the EP Scheme Area. Any new young person's fare offer will be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.
- 4.4.2 Operators must use any suitable and available funding, following agreed and successful funding bids, to provide a group travel offer in the EP Scheme Area. Any new group fares offer will be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.
- 4.4.3 Operators must use any suitable and available funding, following agreed and successful funding bids, to implement multi-operator capping schemes in the EP Scheme Area. Any new multi-operator capping schemes will be implemented under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

## 4.5 Potential Service Enhancements

- 4.5.1 Enhancements and new services will be required to improve bus services in the EP Scheme Area but delivery of these are currently constrained by additional funding. It is hoped that enhancements and/or amendments to frequency and timing of service can be introduced.

## 4.6 Passenger Charter

- 4.6.1 Local bus operators with Wokingham Council are to produce a bus passenger charter to give passengers more of a voice and say in the future of bus services in Wokingham. This aims to ensure that passengers are more involved in bus service planning and improvements. The passenger charter is being developed alongside the EP.

## 5 Governance Arrangements

### 5.1 EP Forum

The Enhanced Partnership Forum will be used to oversee and direct the work of the Scheme. It is set up with the aims of:

- Providing the opportunity for representatives of key stakeholders to discuss issues relating to the local bus network.
- Having the ability to influence consultations, engagement with new stakeholders and make recommendations and decisions.
- Discussing future content and arrangements for the variation and revocation of the EP Plan and EP Scheme.

- 5.1.1 Membership of the Wokingham Borough Council Enhanced Partnership Forum will comprise of, including voting rights:

- 1) All bus operators who run qualifying bus services (1 vote per operator that exceed 20% of bus mileage and **2 votes** for an operator that runs more than 50% of the bus mileage. Operators which function as more than one company but are part of the same financial entity will be treated as a single operator). A bus Operator and any of its Group Companies that operate less than 20% of the aggregate miles operated by all Bus Operators in respect of Qualifying Bus Services within the Scheme Area, **1 vote** in total to represent all of those Operators interests.
- 2) Wokingham Borough Council Executive Member for Active Travel Transport & Highways (chair, **1 vote** and casting vote).
- 3) Wokingham Borough Council Officers (Highways and Transport) (1 vote each up to **2 votes**).

- 4) Neighbouring Local Authority Officers (no votes).
- 5) Representatives of Town or Parish Councils, (up to 3 attendees) (no votes).
- 6) A representative from Reading University (no votes).
- 7) A representative from Royal Berkshire Hospital (no votes).
- 8) Representatives of Community Transport Operators in the EP Scheme Area (no votes).
- 9) Representative of the passenger or community group (no votes).

5.1.2 The operation of the Forum will include these rules:

- 1) Meetings will be arranged by Wokingham Borough Council and take place once every six months.
- 2) An agenda will be circulated by Wokingham Borough Council in advance of the meeting. Minutes will be taken of each meeting and circulated after the meeting for approval by all attendees.
- 3) Decisions will be subject to voting on a simple majority basis. Voting rights are set out in paragraph 5.1.1. above. In the event of a tie the chair will hold the casting vote.
- 4) The bus mileage of all operators will be recalculated annually by the anniversary of the EP in each year (30th September) to capture any network changes that may affect the voting rights within the EP. Additionally, Wokingham Borough Council or any operator may request a recalculation outside of the annual review when necessary.
- 5) Wokingham Borough Council's Executive Member for Highways and Transport or a representative nominated by the Executive Member for Highways and Transport will Chair each meeting.
- 6) All members of the EP Forum will be subject to appropriate confidentially agreements on information disclosed and discussed within the forum.
- 7) Any information for disclosure must be agreed by the appropriate forum members and Wokingham Borough Council prior to its disclosure.
- 8) Listed members of the EP Forum do not have to attend each meeting for the meeting to take place. Any member not attending the meeting will forfeit their ability to input into the meeting. EP Forum members may nominate a representative to attend on their behalf. Any representative must be a member of the organisation which they represent.
- 9) In addition to the above members, external organisations may be invited to join in an advisory capacity. Prior to any external organisation joining the Forum, the invitation, including the length of time the invitation is permitted for, must be approved prior to the Forum meeting, at least three members must approve the invitation to allow the external organisation to attend.
- 10) Any new members of the EP Forum are subject to bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5 and appropriate confidentially agreements.



- 11) Proposals may be put forward for consideration at the EP Forum by any community group, Town or Parish Council. This should be submitted by emailing the proposals to [MyJourney@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:MyJourney@wokingham.gov.uk). Wokingham Borough Council Officers will consider and decide if the proposal is appropriate for consideration at the Forum.
- 12) Any member of the EP Forum may request an interim meeting of the EP Forum by notifying Wokingham Borough Council using the following email address [MyJourney@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:MyJourney@wokingham.gov.uk) and explaining what the issue is and its urgency. Wokingham Borough Council will notify all agreed members of the Forum of the request. An Interim Forum meeting may go ahead if majority support is gained for calling the meeting by members of the forum as listed in Section 5.1.1.
- 13) After EP Forum approval the proposal will move to the local authority approval process, which may include any further statutory approval required. In the event of a local authority approval or statutory approval not being given, the proposal may be reworked and returned to the EP Forum so that it can be reconsidered by Forum members.

5.1.3 Variations to the terms and membership of the Enhanced Partnership Forum may be made under the EP by means of the Bespoke Arrangements for Varying the Enhanced Partnership Scheme as set out in section 5.4 below.

## **5.2 Local Authority Approval Process**

5.2.1 Where proposals are of the nature that Wokingham Borough Council's Constitution requires an Individual Executive Member Decision (IEMD) or a formal Executive Decision, this process will need to take place after the proposal has been approved by the EP Forum. Where a decision does not require an IEMD sign off or an Executive Decision, Wokingham Borough Council may still request sufficient time to allow appropriate consultation prior to the proposal being adopted as a variation to the EP Scheme. All decisions made by the EP Forum are subject to any relevant approvals which are required by Wokingham Borough Council's Constitution or any legislation, regulation, or statutory guidance, including the availability of funding from all sources.

## **5.3 Review of EP Scheme**

5.3.1 As the EP Scheme has been made, it will be reviewed by the EP Forum (which meets every six months) following publication of data on progress towards the targets set out in the Local Bus Service Improvement Plan. Wokingham Borough Council will initiate each review.

- 5.3.2 The EP Forum or EP Board can also decide to review specific elements of the scheme on an ad-hoc basis. EP Forum members, as relevant, should contact Wokingham Borough Council using the following email address [MyJourney@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:MyJourney@wokingham.gov.uk) explaining what the issue is and its urgency. Wokingham Borough Council will then decide whether to table at the next scheduled meeting or arrangement for all or the necessary members of the appropriate board to gather more quickly using the mechanism outline in Section 5.1.2(11).

## 5.4 Bespoke Arrangements for Varying or Revoking the Enhanced Partnership Scheme

- 5.4.1 Under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000, Enhanced Partnership Scheme Variations where this section is quoted will be subject to the bespoke voting mechanism also as set out in this section.

- 5.4.2 Changes to or new flexibility provisions may be added to any part of the EP Scheme under powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000, where Section 5.5.1 does not apply (Revocation of an EP Scheme), using the Enhanced Partnership Scheme bespoke variation arrangements in Section 5 or the statutory objection mechanism as set out in The Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018 if Wokingham Borough Council consider this to be more appropriate.

### Proposer of a variation

- 1) 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. The proposer of a variation should demonstrate how this might contribute to achieving the objectives set out in the BSIP, EP Plan and current local transport policies. Such requests should be in writing and submitted to [MyJourney@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:MyJourney@wokingham.gov.uk). Wokingham Borough Council will forward all requests onto all EP Forum members within 10 working days and place the item on the agenda for the next EP Forum meeting.
- 2) Variation to the “Proposer of a Variation” mechanism may be amended or replaced using a bespoke variation under the powers at s.138E of the Transport Act 2000.
  - a. Decision-making process and bespoke objection mechanism at EP Forum
- 3) On receipt of a request for a variation under this section, Wokingham Borough Council will place the item on the agenda for the EP Forum, giving at least 14 days’ notice in advance of the meeting, so that the EP Forum members can consider the proposed variation. If the proposed variation is agreed by a majority of representatives present and approved by any subsequent approval process,

Wokingham Borough Council will make the EP Scheme variation within seven working days and publish the revised EP Scheme on the My Journey website.

## **5.5 Revocation of an EP Scheme**

- 5.5.1 If Wokingham Borough Council or another member of the EP Forum believes it is necessary to revoke the EP Scheme, the EP Forum will be reconvened. If the decision is taken to revoke the EP Scheme it will follow the legislative procedures for revocation or use bespoke arrangements as set in Section 5.
- 5.5.2 If at any point in the future, any area covered by this EP Scheme is included in a Bus Franchising Scheme, the relevant requirements set out in this EP Scheme document will cease to apply to areas covered by the franchising scheme, in line with the arrangements set out in the franchising scheme.<sup>6</sup>

## **5.6 Confidentiality and data sharing**

- 5.6.1 Members of the EP Forum must respect the confidentiality of any data or other information that is shown to them in confidence as part of their membership of the EP Forum.
- 5.6.2 If appropriate the Wokingham EP Forum will consider issuing individual Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) to all EP Forum members to support confidentiality.

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<sup>6</sup> Section 123H(6)-(8) of the Transport Act 2000

## 5.7 Force Majeure

- 5.7.1 If any party is prevented, hindered, or delayed in or from performing any of its obligations under this Enhanced Partnership Scheme by a Force Majeure Event (**Affected Party**), then, so long as that Force Majeure Event continues, the Affected Party shall not be in breach of this agreement or otherwise liable for any such failure or delay in the performance of such obligations under the agreement.
- 5.7.2 The corresponding obligations of the other parties will be suspended to the same extent as those of the Affected Party.
- 5.7.3 The Affected Party shall:
- i. As soon as reasonably practicable after the start of the Force Majeure Event, but not later than three (3) Working Days from its start, notify Wokingham Borough Council in writing of the Force Majeure Event, the date on which it started, its likely potential duration, and the effect of the Force Majeure Event on its ability to perform any of its obligations under this Agreement; and
  - ii. use all reasonable endeavours to mitigate the effect of the Force Majeure Event.
- 5.7.4 As soon as practicable following such notification, Wokingham Borough Council will arrange an Enhanced Partnership Forum meeting to agree all reasonable endeavours and appropriate terms to mitigate the effects of the Force Majeure Event and facilitate the continued performance of the agreement in the public interest given any constraints by legislation, regulations or otherwise.
- 5.7.5 The Affected Party shall notify Wokingham Borough Council as soon as practicable after the Force Majeure Event ceases or no longer causes the Affected Party to be unable to comply with its obligations under this Agreement. Following such notification, this Agreement shall continue to be performed on the terms existing immediately prior to the occurrence of the Force Majeure Event, unless amended, varied or otherwise prior to the Force Majeure Event ceasing. On receipt of such notification, Wokingham Borough Council will contact all EP Forum members and all other affected stakeholders to confirm that the Force Majeure Event has ceased.

## **6 Section 6 Dispute Resolution**

- 6.1.1 If a dispute arises in connection with this Scheme, the parties shall follow the procedure set out in this Section 6.
- 6.1.2 Any party shall give to the other written notice of the Dispute, setting out its nature and full particulars (Dispute Notice), together with relevant supporting documents. On Service of the Dispute Notice, Wokingham Borough Council shall attempt in good faith to resolve the Dispute.
- 6.1.3 If Wokingham Borough Council and the affected parties are unable for any reason to resolve the Dispute within twenty (20) working days of the Service of the Dispute Notice, Wokingham Borough Council will seek the advice of the Department for Transport.
- 6.1.4 Nothing in this Dispute resolution produce shall prevent the Parties from seeking from any court of competent jurisdiction an interim order restraining the other Party from doing any act or compelling the other Party to do any act.
- 6.1.5 If the dispute cannot be resolved by the Parties pursuant to Clause 6.1.3 the Parties shall refer it to mediation pursuant to the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR) Model Mediation Procedure unless:
  - i. Wokingham Borough Council considers that the dispute is not suitable for resolution by mediation; or
  - ii. One or more of the Parties does not agree to mediation.

## **6.2 Dispute Mediation and Consequential Provisions**

- 6.2.1 The procedure for mediation and consequential provision relating to mediation are as follows:
- 6.2.2 A neutral adviser or mediator ("the Mediator") shall be chosen by agreement between the Parties or, if they are unable to agree upon a Mediator within 10 Working Days after a request by one Party to the other or if the Mediator agreed upon is unable or unwilling to act, either Party shall within 10 Working Days from the date of the proposal to appoint a Mediator or within 10 Working Days of notice to either Party that he is unable or unwilling to act, apply to appoint a Mediator.
- 6.2.3 The Parties shall within 10 Working Days of the appointment of the Mediator meet with Mediator to agree a programme for the exchange of all relevant information and the structure to be adopted for negotiations to be held. If considered appropriate, the Parties may at any stage seek assistance from a Mediator, to provide guidance on a suitable procedure.
- 6.2.4 Unless otherwise agreed, all negotiations connected with the dispute and any settlement agreement relating to it shall be conducted in confidence and without prejudice to the rights of the Parties in any future proceedings.
- 6.2.5 If the Parties reach agreement on the resolution of the dispute, the agreement shall be recorded in writing and shall be binding on the Parties once it is signed by their duly Authorised Representatives.
- 6.2.6 Failing agreement, either of the Parties may invite the Mediator to provide a non-binding but informative opinion in writing. Such an opinion shall be provided on a without prejudice basis and shall not be used in evidence in any proceedings relating to the Agreement without the prior written consent of both Parties; and

- 6.2.7 If the Parties fail to reach agreement in the structured negotiations within sixty (60) Working Days of the Mediator being appointed, or such longer period as may be agreed by the Parties, then any Dispute or difference between them may be referred to the courts or Traffic Commissioner as appropriate.

Table A1: Bus Priority Facilities

Intervention Number	Type of Bus Facility	Bus Link Description	Hours of Operation	Category of Vehicle Permitted	Responsibility for Maintaining
A1	Bus Lane	A3290	24 hours, 7 days a week		Wokingham Borough Council
A2	Bus Lane	A33 from the junction of MereOak Lane towards M4 Junction 11 up to Wokingham Borough Council's Borough boundary	24 hours, 7 days a week		Wokingham Borough Council
A3	Bus Lane	Old Shinfield Road from its junction with Shinfield Road to the Black Boy Roundabout (northbound)	24 hours, 7 days a week		Wokingham Borough Council
A4	Bus Link	Sustainable Link from junction with Hyde End Lane to a point 80m southwest of Martyns Crescent, Shinfield. (northeast and southwest bound)	24 hours, 7 days a week	Bus Services, Coaches, Minibuses over 9 seats, bicycles and pedestrians	Developer until such time as the link is adopted
A5	Bus Gate	Milton Road from car park access to junction with Rectory Road (southbound)	24 hours, 7 days a week	Bus services only	Wokingham Borough Council
A6	Bus Gate	A4 London Road service road to A4 London Road (northbound)	24 hours, 7 days a week	Bus services only	Wokingham Borough Council
A7	Bus Gate	Broad Hinton 9.4m south of Hubbard Close	24 hours, 7 days a week	Bus services only	Wokingham Borough Council
A8	Bus Gate	Basingstoke Road, signalised junction with A33/MereOak Lane (northwest bound)	24 hours, 7 days a week	Bus services only	Wokingham Borough Council
A9	Bus Gate	MereOak Lane, signalised junction with A33	24 hours, 7 days a week	Bus services only	Wokingham Borough Council
A10	Priory Traffic Signals	A3290 onto with Suttonseeds Roundabout	24 hours, 7 days a week	Bus services only	Wokingham Borough Council



Table B1: Real Time Passenger Information

Reference Number	Bus Stop Name	NaPTAN	Responsibility for Maintaining
B1	Loddon Bridge, The George	35075120001	Wokingham Borough Council
B2	Loddon Bridge, The George	35075120002	Wokingham Borough Council
B3	Drome Path	35075160002	Wokingham Borough Council
B4	Winnersh Post Office	35075220002	Wokingham Borough Council
B5	Winnersh Crossroads	35075240001	Wokingham Borough Council
B6	Mays Lane	35075020001	Wokingham Borough Council
B7	Mays Lane	35075020002	Wokingham Borough Council
B8	Earley Station	35075060001	Wokingham Borough Council
B9	Earley Station	35075060001	Wokingham Borough Council
B10	Meadow Road	35075060002	Wokingham Borough Council
B11	Emmbrook - Rifle Volunteer	35075100002	Wokingham Borough Council
B12	Emmbrook - Rifle Volunteer	35075320001	Wokingham Borough Council
B13	Wokingham Hospital	35075320002	Wokingham Borough Council
B14	Wokingham Hospital	35076100001	Wokingham Borough Council
B15	Ratepayers Hall	35076120002	Wokingham Borough Council
B16	Ratepayers Hall	35076340001	Wokingham Borough Council
B17	Shinfield - School Green	35076340002	Wokingham Borough Council
B18	Arborfield Cross - The Bull	35077120001	Wokingham Borough Council
B19	Arborfield Cross - The Bull	35077220001	Wokingham Borough Council
B20	Garrison - Langley Common Rd	35077220002	Wokingham Borough Council

Reference Number	Bus Stop Name	NaPTAN	Responsibility for Maintaining
B21	Barkham Ride - St James Road	35077280002	Wokingham Borough Council
B22	Barkham Ride - St James Road	35077520001	Wokingham Borough Council
B23	Doles Farm	35077640001	Wokingham Borough Council
B24	Shinfield Park	35084560001	Wokingham Borough Council
B25	London Road / The Drive	35090100003	Wokingham Borough Council
B26	Wokingham - Broad Street	35075400001	Wokingham Borough Council
B27	Wokingham - Broad Street	35075400002	Wokingham Borough Council
B28	Wokingham - Broad Street	35075400003	Wokingham Borough Council
B29	University of Reading Whiteknights House	39027900002	Wokingham Borough Council
B30	Meadow Road	35075100001	Wokingham Borough Council
B31	Holt Lane	35075360001	Wokingham Borough Council
B32	Wokingham Station Stop 1	35059890001	Wokingham Borough Council
B33	Wokingham Station Stop 2	35059890002	Wokingham Borough Council
B34	Bulmershe Court, Woodlands Avenue	35085080001	Wokingham Borough Council
B35	Bulmershe Court, Woodlands Avenue	35085080002	Wokingham Borough Council

### Table C1: Contact Details

#### **Report a road safety concern**

To report a road safety concern visit <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/roads/traffic-management-and-road-safety/report-road-safety-concern>

#### **Report non-urgent tree enquires**

To report non-urgent tree concerns visit [Trees and their maintenance](#)

#### **Gritting**

To find information on gritting please visit: [Gritting and snow clearance](#)

To report urgent gritting issues follow the urgent process below.

#### **Request traffic enforcement**

To request traffic enforcement raise a request through the Highways General Enquiry form at [www.wokingham.gov.uk/HGE](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/HGE)

#### **Follow ups and other highways issues**

To follow up on a previous requests or to raise an issue not covered on our website, please submit your request through our Highways General Enquiry form at [www.wokingham.gov.uk/HGE](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/HGE)

Please include a previously quoted reference number where applicable as this helps us locate your original request and any further correspondence.

#### **For all urgent issues**

Issues causing immediate danger should always be reported by phone to 0118 974 6000 (select option 2 for roads and road maintenance) Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. Call 0800 212 111 if it is outside of our office hours.

## Annex D

Table D1: Routes and Vehicles – Specification as of July 2025

Route	Euro Rating	CCTV	AVL	Contactless	Tap-On Tap-Off
(3) Reading - Shinfield - Arborfield - Wokingham	Euro 5*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(4/4A) Reading - Wokingham - Bracknell via A329	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(13/14) Reading - Cemetery Junction - Woodley	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(19A/C) Reading - Woodley - Earley - Reading	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(21/21A) Reading - University of Reading - Lower Earley	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(121) Norreys Estate - Wokingham - Tesco	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(122) Woosehill - Emmbrook - Wokingham	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(125) Wokingham - Finchampstead - Crowthorne	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(127) Maidenhead - Reading via Twyford, Sonning & Woodley	Euro 5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(128) Reading - Woodley - Sonning - Twyford - Winnersh - Wokingham	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(129) Reading - Sonning - Twyford - Maidenhead	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(145) Reading - Three Mile Cross - Riseley - Finchampstead - Wokingham	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	No	No
(153) Upper Wargrave - Reading	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	No	No
(154) Stratfield Saye - Beech Hill - Loddon Court Farm - Reading	Euro 6	Yes	Yes	No	No
(300) Thames Valley P&R - Hospital Mere oak P&R	Euro 5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(500) Winnersh Triangle P&R - Reading	Euro 5*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
(850) Henley - Twyford - Reading	Euro 5	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
* Use Compressed Natural Gas, which is almost Euro 6 standard					

### Definitions

**AVL** – Automatic Vehicle Location. Equipment in buses that allows the location to be tracked which is especially useful for Real Time Information (RTI).

**BSIP** – Local Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). This was first published by Wokingham Borough Council on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and latest BSIP is BSIP2 dated January 2023.

**Bus Franchising Area** – area in which a statutory franchising scheme operates, as prescribed in the Transport Act 2000, as amended by the Bus Services Act 2017 (section 123). Bus services in the area are controlled and specified by the transport authority, with bus operators providing services under one or more contracts.

**Bus Gate** – short stretch of road carriageway that is restricted to use by buses and (where specified) taxis and other authorised vehicles as indicated on appropriate signage on the approach.

**Bus Lane** – signposted lane, designated for use by registered local bus services and (where specified) taxis and other authorised vehicles, at the times also indicated by signage.

**Bus Lane and Junction Enforcement** – action taken to ensure that bus lanes and bus gates are used only by authorised vehicles. This is often carried out by using enforcement cameras to record unauthorised use, with the issue of civil penalties to offenders under section 144 of the Transport Act 2000.

**Bus Link** – is a road or street, designated for use by registered local bus services and (where specified) other authorised modes of transport such as pedestrians and cyclists.

**Priority Traffic Signals** – traffic signals which provide a benefit to buses at junctions through controlled signalling, for example by extending green times or hurry calling green times.

**Bus Stand** – bus stop clearway as defined in accordance with paragraph 1(a) of Part 1 to Schedule 19 of The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002 but which will permit a local bus to stand within the clearway for as long as maybe necessary up to a maximum period of 10 minutes.

**CCTV** – closed circuit television system, whereby static or mobile cameras are used to record offences or for surveillance and safety and security purposes.

**CVRAS** – Clean Vehicle Retrofit Accreditation Scheme (CVRAS) and is a certification scheme for manufacturers of retrofit emissions reduction technology that will enable Clean Air Zone (CAZ) compliance of legacy fleet vehicles to address the air pollution emissions from buses.

**DRT** – Demand Responsive Transport, whereby the transport service is not tied to a fixed route or the stopping times at local bus stops. The service is a shared service which aims to operate as and when required within a defined area, during a set timeframe.

**Enforcement Camera** – roadside camera that records and produces suitable evidence of unauthorised use of bus lanes or bus gates for the Local Highway Authority to issue civil penalties under section 144 of the Transport Act 2000.

**EP Scheme Area** – area to which this EP Scheme document applies.

**Euro VI equivalent standards** – Euro VI diesel bus or a bus with CVRAS approved technologies retrofitted to a diesel bus to reduce NOx and PM emissions and achieve Euro VI equivalent standards.

**Facilities** – physical assets that are provided at specific locations along particular routes (or parts of routes) within the EP scheme area or new and improved bus priority measures. This is deemed for such purposes of section 138D(1) of the Transport Act 2000.

**Measures** – improvements with the aim of:

- Increasing the use of local bus service serving the routes to which the measures relate or ending or reducing a decline in their use; or
- Improving the quality of local bus service.

**Local Authority** – prescribed under section 23 of the Local Government Act 2003.

**Local Highway Authority** – Local Authority with responsibility for the maintenance of highway infrastructure in its local authority area. In the case of this EP Scheme, this means Wokingham Borough Council.

**Multi-Operator Capping** – common fares and ticketing product, applied across multiple bus operators, which will cap a user’s travel cost according to the lowest price available for the journey or journeys made.

**Operator** – local bus operator, operating registered local bus services.

**Real Time Information** – using technology to track the location of buses in real time. Information is transmitted to bus stops or devices to indicate to passengers the predicted arrival time at a particular point.

**Registered Local Bus Service** – as set out in Section 2 of the Transport Act 1985.

**Wokingham Enhanced Partnership Plan** – document made pursuant to section 138A of the Transport Act 2000 and which is required to be in place for an EP Scheme to be made.

**Zero Emission Bus** – bus that emits no pollutants at its tailpipe.

END OF DOCUMENT