

Record of Decisions

Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024 Update

Decision Taker

Cabinet on 11 June 2024

Decision

1. that the Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024 in outline, as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be approved and submitted to the Department for Transport in June 2024; and
2. that the final publication of the Bus Service Improvement Plan 2024, including design and editorial changes as required, be delegated to the Divisional Director – Planning, Housing and Climate Emergency in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Pride in Place, Transport and Parking.

Reason for the Decision

The proposals help the Council to deliver the ambition of a healthy, happy and prosperous Torbay by improving accessibility for everyone across Torbay, improving connectivity to facilities whether that is education, health, employment or other, ensuring those most deprived are not excluded from that connectivity. The proposals support Torbay's town centres and other trip generating hubs in our towns, and help give our community choice in how they travel and move journeys away from the private car and onto zero emission buses to contribute to reductions in Torbay's carbon footprint.

The Plan will support the whole community as well as visitors and businesses and increase the opportunities for travel around Torbay for all, whether through improvements to the vehicles used on existing services or considering alternative and new opportunities for routes.

Implementation

This decision will come into force and may be implemented on 24 June 2024 unless the call-in procedure is triggered (as set out in the Standing Orders in relation to Overview and Scrutiny).

Information

The first Torbay Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) was agreed and submitted to the Government in October 2021 as a bidding document demonstrating ambitious proposals to deliver the National Bus Strategy as a local level. Since then the funding packages available have substantially changed and the Council was required to update the BSIP to reflect this. The Plan will continue to set out a vision and priorities for the future bus services in Torbay and will be a high level document used to secure grant funding in 2024 from the Department for Transport and demonstrate further opportunities for investment in future years. The BSIP will be delivered in partnership with local bus operators through the Torbay Bus Enhanced Partnership established in 2022.

The Transport and Parking Working Party was consulted on the draft BSIP on 15 May 2024.

Councillor Billings proposed and Councillor Bye seconded a motion that was unanimously

agreed by the Cabinet as set out above.

Alternative Options considered and rejected at the time of the decision

There were options about the level of ambition demonstrated in the Plan and therefore the extent of the proposals. Those included in the submitted report set out a strong basis to recover and rebuild bus use in Torbay and in many ways to initially go “back to basics”. The overall rate of recovery for bus passenger journeys in Torbay was around 78%, having fallen initially from 7.6 million in 2018/19 to 2.7 million in 2020/21. Concessionary passenger journeys were at 3.5 million and reduced to 0.9 million. These have recovered to 2.3 million (66%).

The document was required in order to secure indicative grant funding and not to submit the Plan would also undermine the objectives of the Community and Corporate Plan and therefore this option was discounted.

Is this a Key Decision?

No

Does the call-in procedure apply?

Yes

Declarations of interest (including details of any relevant dispensations issued by the Standards Committee)

None

Published

14 June 2024

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Leader of Torbay Council on behalf of the Cabinet