

DRAFT

THE ESSEX ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP PLAN 2022-2027 AND FIRST ESSEX ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP SCHEME

INTRODUCTION

- 1 In June 2021 Essex County Council issued its formal statement of intent to proceed with an Enhanced Partnership. This Enhanced Partnership is intended to deliver the vision and ambition set out in the Essex Bus Service Improvement Plan 2021 – 2026.
- 2 Safer Greener Healthier (SGH) is Essex County Council's vision for travel across Essex. It aims to deliver a shift towards active and sustainable travel by encouraging Essex residents to rethink their journeys. The SGH vision is to make it as easy as possible for residents to travel more sustainably (walking, cycling, e-scooter or taking the bus or train). Bus travel is safer, greener and healthier than travel by car, both for individuals and for communities. If you travel by bus, rather than car, everyone benefits.
- 3 Buses also help deliver the four key objectives set in ECC's organisational strategy:
 - **A strong, inclusive and sustainable economy:** buses support strong local economic growth. They provide access to education and training to help people develop their skills; they provide employment opportunities and also get people to work; they are disproportionately used by those on lower incomes and can be critical in linking job seekers and jobs; they link people with shops and leisure and can support a vibrant night time economy; they also allow urban shopping centres to be green and attractive and to feel safe. They generate economic growth without the costs of congestion, crashes, air pollution and carbon emissions.
 - **A high quality environment:** moving your longer journeys from car to bus helps improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions. The greatest single climate change mitigation measure for the transport sector in Essex is to transfer journeys from car to bus, bike or walking. That is true even given a wholly diesel bus fleet. Bus, bike and walking as the predominant modes for urban areas enable the creation of a more attractive environment than one dominated by road space for cars and large scale often multi-storey car parking.
 - **Health, wellbeing and independence for all ages:** buses are disproportionately used by older and younger people and by people with a disability. They provide independence and an ability to access healthcare, education, training and services. For many people they are a key part of being able to live independently and successfully in their community.
 - **A good place for children and families to grow:** using the bus means you're investing in your community. You're supporting access to services and ensuring that communities are diverse and not just a good place to live for those with one or even two cars. Switching journeys to bus also helps improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions. Bus journeys are often a social occasion for regular passengers, allowing people to build friendships and networks that combat loneliness and ensure towns and villages don't feel isolated.

BSIP Objectives and Enhanced Partnership approach

BSIP Objectives	EP Approach
1. Rebuilding the Essex bus network to recover from the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To improve customer information and make bus travel more accessible and attractive• To develop a clear Essex identity for bus travel

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop a single portal for information and advice
2. Developing an attractive, sustainable, affordable, bus network offering a realistic alternative to car use for as many people as possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To invest in schemes that deliver bus network and service improvements • To seek funding for transformational projects, delivering a step change in service delivery and a zero carbon fleet; to provide better access to jobs, training and education; to provide a high quality rapid transit service; to rejuvenate market town services; and to offer digital demand responsive services to those who currently have no access to services • To make improvements to ticketing
3. Reversing the long term decline in passengers both in absolute terms and as a modal share of all journeys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To undertake twelve wholesale reviews of the commercial and supported network on a district geography basis and identify opportunities for improvement • To include in those reviews the network (e.g. routes and service frequencies); the supporting infrastructure (e.g. bus priority); ticketing and vehicle standards
4. Improving public health and helping address climate change by reducing carbon emissions and pollutants such as particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, ozone and sulphur dioxide produced by people travelling to and around Essex.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify opportunities for improved vehicle technology and modal shift

- 4 [The Competition and Markets Authority has been consulted on the proposals as required by section 138F of the Transport Act 2000 (**‘the 2000 Act’**) and that the [name of authority] is satisfied that the competition test at Part 1 of Schedule 10 of 2000 Act has been met. – ***NB the CMA will be consulted once the first 28 day period of consultation with operators has completed and if there is agreement to proceed (i.e. the objection threshold has not been met)***]

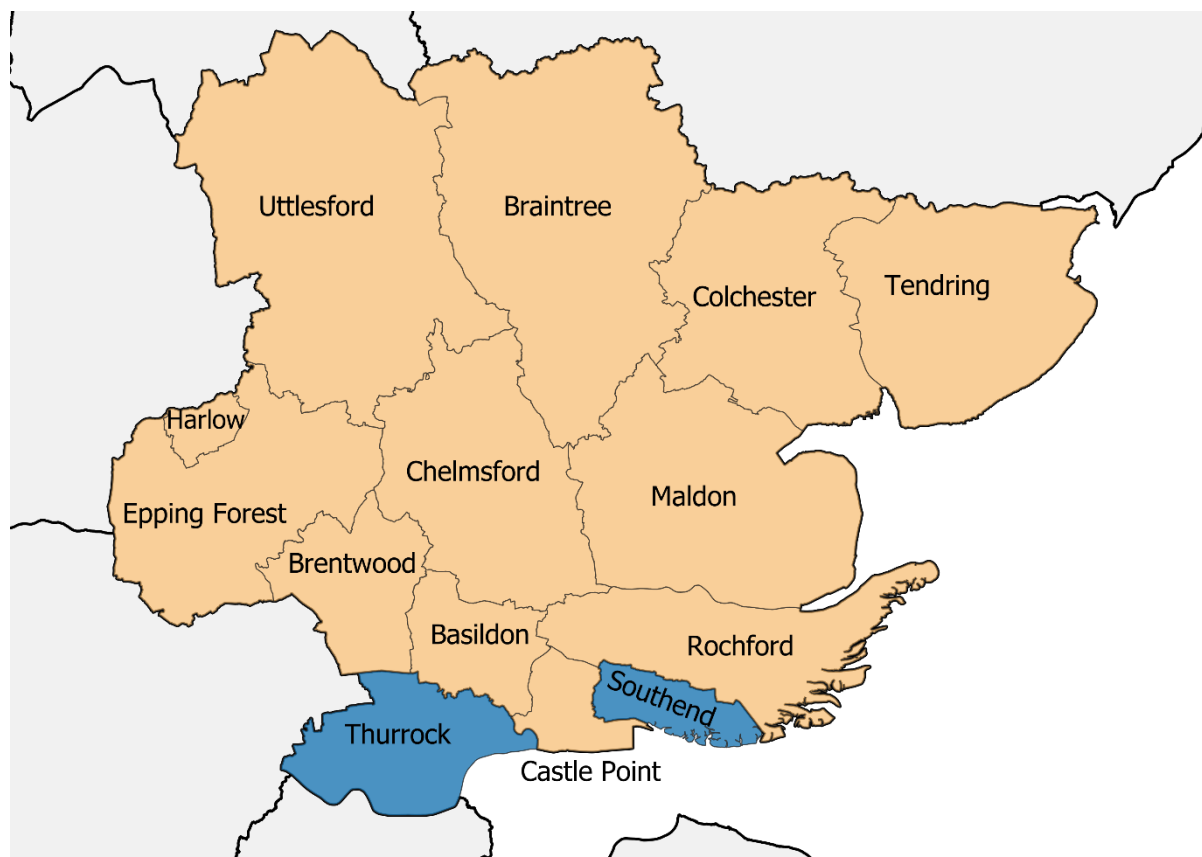
PART 1 - EP PLAN

THE ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP PLAN FOR BUSES IS MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 138G(1) OF THE TRANSPORT ACT 2000 BY ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

Enhanced Partnership Plan Area and Time Period

- 1 The Essex Enhanced Partnership Plan will cover the entire administrative County of Essex as shown in the Map below:

Administrative Essex (the Enhanced Partnership area does not cover Southend and Thurrock Unitary Authorities).



- 2 The plan is for a period of five years covering the period April 2022 to April 2027.

Impacts on the local bus market

- 3 The relevant factors that will affect, or have the potential to affect, the local bus market over the life of this plan (April 2022 to 2026) are:
 - The future commercial sustainability of the network
 - Changes to travel patterns as a result of the covid pandemic
 - Network capacity and congestion
 - Climate change and air quality impacts
 - Local authority resourcing and capacity

Passenger Experience

- 4 Essex County Council invests in the annual passenger survey undertaken by Transport Focus. The key results are below:

Key results

Satisfaction (%)	2016 all satisfied	2017 all satisfied	2018 all satisfied	2019 all satisfied	2019 very satisfied	2019 fairly satisfied	2019 neither /nor	2019 all dissatisfied	2019 base size
Overall journey satisfaction									
All passengers	86	85	80	86	46	40	8	5	795
Fare-paying passengers	78	79	72	82	37	44	11	7	307
Free pass holders	95	95	90	92	58	34	5	3	485
Aged 16 to 34	75	70	70	80	21	59	12	8	96
Aged 35 to 59	85	87	79	82	48	34	10	8	159
Passengers commuting	76	73	68	80	28	51	13	7	186
Passengers not commuting	94	95	89	90	57	33	5	4	580
Passengers saying they have a disability	89	87	78	87	44	43	8	5	258
Value for money									
All fare-paying passengers	46	51	44	53	23	30	17	29	290
Aged 16 to 34	31	41	37	47	23	24	22	31	86
Aged 35 to 59	63	60	54	58	22	36	15	27	133
Passengers commuting	43	43	41	50	19	32	20	30	166
Passengers not commuting	52	67	50	59	30	29	13	28	118
Punctuality and time waiting for bus									
Punctuality of the bus	70	68	61	65	38	27	12	23	700
The length of time waited	70	68	63	69	37	32	13	18	764
On-bus journey time									
Time the journey on the bus took	85	83	81	86	53	33	9	5	795

- 5 Perceptions around bus service accessibility, reliability and safety also impact people's willingness to even consider using bus services. As set out above, studies by Transport Focus and undertaken through ECC's own behavioural change scheme have demonstrated a number of key perceptions that serve to limit people's willingness to even try bus services. The common perceptions that these studies suggest are below:

Barriers to using buses identified by ECC residents

Planning a journey

- Unfamiliarity and effort of planning a bus journey for the first time – finding, understanding and working out door-to-door journey times, bus routes, timetables, tickets, payment, etc. adds cognitive load
- Hassle of timekeeping and getting up earlier to factor in walking time + waiting time + journey time
- Unaware of journey planning aids such as mobile bus journey planning apps, bus stop search, walking routes, live bus times, next bus, m-tickets, contactless payment

Accessibility and experience at bus stop

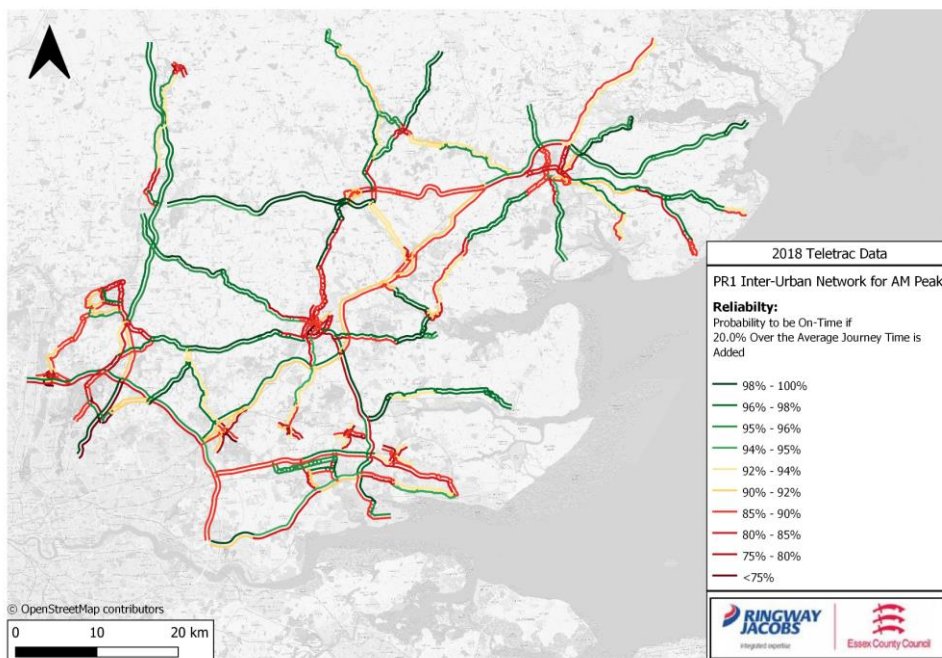
- Lack of easily understandable and real-time information at bus stops – adds anxiety and stress of not knowing if the bus will arrive on time
- Confusion about bus numbers and finding the right stop/stand
- Unaware of journey planning apps with live maps, times, next bus, etc.
- Unreliable arrival times and lost time waiting with the risk of being late and sense of not being "in control"
- Uncomfortable experiences at bus stops with no seating, shelter and lighting, particularly when waiting in the cold, rain and dark
- Worries about personal safety and security on walking routes and at bus stops – heightened at night-time and for younger women
- All amplified when compared with the "home comforts" and convenience of commuting by car

On Bus Journey Experience

- Uncertainty and variability of journey times makes commuting by bus a stressful and emotionally effortful experience – car commuters crave certainty and control
- Time is of the essence – being late for work/study despite getting up earlier compounds the perceived loss of switching from car to bus
- Overcrowding at peak times and lack of available seats makes for a tiring and off-putting experience, particularly on school routes
- Lack of information inside the bus - not knowing the next bus stop and when to get off adds to the uncertainty for car commuters trialling bus for the first time

Data on journey speed and the impact of congestion

- 6 It is clear that increases in congestion levels have a significant impact on bus journey speeds and on reliability, punctuality and service efficiency.
- 7 Although we have general data on congestion and journey reliability, we do not hold separate data for buses. An indication of the general impact of congestion on the morning peak is shown below:



Outcomes

- 8 In order to improve local bus services we need to deliver the following outcomes:
 - Improved journey reliability rising to 95% from 92%
 - Overall passenger satisfaction of at least 86%
 - A return to annual passenger journeys of over 40 million from a covid low of just over 12 million
 - Creating a new paradigm for the delivery of services across the diversity of Essex communities
 - Delivering innovative service solutions that transform people's journeys
 - Transforming the policy framework that underpins and shapes design and decisions to deliver more sustainable travel options
 - Delivering twelve wholesale network reviews to improve services and increase patronage
 - Delivering better and more accessible customer information to enable modal shift
 - Delivering a better overall customer experience

Interventions and Policies

9 The partnership believes the following key interventions are required:

- The development of new models for services supporting urban areas, areas of relative deprivation, new developments, rural areas and market towns;
- Better information and a clear identity for the network to support current and potential passengers
- Improved networks supported by better infrastructure, offering clearer information, better ticketing, higher quality, frequency and better integration

Review and Consultation Process

10 The Enhanced Partnership Plan will be reviewed annually alongside the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). The review process will follow that of the BSIP which is as follows:

- The Essex BSIP will be directed and overseen by two governing bodies. The First is the Essex Bus Strategy Forum (EBSF). The second is the Essex Bus Strategy Board (EBSB). These are advisory bodies and have no formal decision making powers.

11 The Essex Bus Strategy Forum will bring together representatives from a wide range of key stakeholder groups to review the progress of the BSIP annually and to give recommendations to the EBSB about the priorities for improving the bus network that it should consider for the following year.

12 It will meet annually, in the November of each year and will have the following composition:

- Chair: ECC Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport
- Deputy Chair: ECC Deputy Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport
- Representatives from ECCs governing and opposition political groups
- ECC officers from Highways & Transport, Education and Finance,
- All the commercial bus service operators,
- All voluntary transport sector transport providers,
- All Essex District, Borough and City Councils
- Representatives of the wider business sector in Essex (for example, Chambers of Trade, Commerce and Business Improvement Districts)
- Passenger representative bodies (Essex Transportation Representatives, Bus User Groups, Transport Focus and Bus Users UK)
- The NHS
- Observer Status - neighbouring transport authorities

13 The Essex Bus Strategy Board will be an executive board comprised of representatives from those groups and bodies that have the key delivery roles for improving the bus network. It will:

- Set future BSIP strategic aims and targets for improving bus services
- Develop policy and recommendations to steer ECC and wider planning around the shape and direction of the Essex bus network
- Make policy recommendations around climate change outcomes, health, environmental, development and parking policy from a bus network perspective to ensure that proper weight is given to the opportunities and needs of the bus sector when these decisions are being made.
- Be embedded as a consultee into wider ECC policy and planning formulation processes including the revised Local Transport Plan

14 The EBSB formally meet twice yearly in December and June of each year (although additional meetings will be arranged as/if the need arises). It will have the following membership:

- Chair: ECC Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport
- Deputy Chair: ECC Deputy Cabinet member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport
- Three ECC council members representing opposition groups
- Four members representing the commercial bus industry - one from each of the three leading bus operating companies determined by the number of registered local bus service bus Km run and one nominated by small and medium enterprise bus operators.
- Three members nominated by the Essex Districts/Borough/City Councils
- One member nominated by Essex's Community Transport service providers
- One member from Transport Focus to represent passenger interests

15 The EBSB will make an annual statement to Essex County Council's Cabinet to outline progress towards its goals and make recommendations for policy or measures need to meet its aims.

16 There will also be a further Board, the Enhanced Partnership Management Board (EPMB). This group represents all the parties to the Enhanced Partnership. This is the Board which will formally make decisions on the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme. The role of the EPMB will be to:

- Oversee the delivery of the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme(s),
- Manage the relationship between the partners
- Identify priorities and aims/targets or future 'EP Schemes'
- Identify additional measures that the EP will need to take
- Identify any additional facilities required to meet the objectives of the EP

17 The EPMB will comprise:

- Chair: A Rotating Chair alternating between ECC and the three operator groups
- The Director of ECC Highways and Transport
- The Head of Integrated Passenger Transport Unit ECC
- Three representatives from the large bus operating companies
- Three representatives from Medium sized bus operating companies
- Three representatives from the small sized bus operating companies

Analysis of local bus services

18 Essex has a relatively extensive local bus network.



- 19 The four largest urban areas are the focus for the commercial network, with bus operations focusing on high frequency services (10 to 30 minute frequencies) between residential areas, transport hubs and employment, health and shopping centres. Commercial operations tend to focus on daytime operations, broadly between 05:00 and 19:00 and on Mondays to Saturdays.
- 20 There is also a strong inter-urban commercial network along the main roads linking larger settlement and other attractor sites such as Stansted Airport, including the A120, the A130, the A414, the A13, and the A127.
- 21 There are less comprehensive commercial networks around the smaller market towns with these being supplemented by interurban services which travel through them as an intermediate destination. However small towns and some areas in larger towns are not commercially attractive.
- 22 As of 1st July 2021, there were four hundred and forty (440) registered local bus services, open to the general public operating in Essex.
- 23 In the financial year 2019/20 overall the bus network in Essex carried 40,774,681 passenger journeys. Of these some 3,642,437 passenger journeys were carried out by Essex County Council contracted local services in 2019/20. The current estimate for 2020/21 for the overall bus network is 12.7 million passenger journeys.

- 24 The five largest operators in Essex carry 95.57% of passenger journeys in Essex between them.
- 25 Between 2015/16 and 2019/20 bus passenger use in Essex dropped by around 1.4%, from 41,342,995 passengers carried to 40,774,681 passengers carried.
- 26 Essex does appear to have outperformed both the national and England (outside London) trend for bus passenger use, despite the pressures set out above.
- Bus passenger use fell nationally by around **9.9%** and
 - bus use in England outside London fell by **10.7%**

Objectives of the Enhanced Partnership Plan

- 27 The Objectives of the Enhanced Partnership Plan are those of the Bus Service Improvement Plan:
- Rebuilding the Essex bus network to recover from the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic
 - Developing an attractive, sustainable, affordable, bus network offering a realistic alternative to car use for as many people as possible.
 - Reversing the long term decline in passengers both in absolute terms and as a modal share of all journeys
 - Improving public health and helping address climate change by reducing carbon emissions and pollutants such as particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, ozone and sulphur dioxide produced by people travelling to and around Essex.

Enhanced Partnership Plan and relationship to schemes

- 28 The first Enhanced Partnership scheme is focused on delivering the following elements of the Plan and BSIP objectives:

<i>BSIP Objectives</i>	<i>EP Approach</i>
1. Rebuilding the Essex bus network to recover from the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve customer information and make bus travel more accessible and attractive • To develop a clear Essex identity for bus travel • To develop a single portal for information and advice
2. Developing an attractive, sustainable, affordable, bus network offering a realistic alternative to car use for as many people as possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To invest in schemes that deliver bus network and service improvements • To seek funding for transformational projects, delivering a step change in service delivery and a zero carbon fleet; to provide better access to jobs, training and education; to provide a high quality rapid transit service; to rejuvenate market town services; and to offer digital demand responsive services to those who currently have no access to services • To make improvements to ticketing
3. Reversing the long term decline in passengers both in absolute terms and as a modal share of all journeys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To undertake twelve wholesale reviews of the commercial and supported network on a district geography basis and identify opportunities for improvement • To include in those reviews the network (e.g. routes and service frequencies); the

	supporting infrastructure (e.g. bus priority); ticketing and vehicle standards
4. Improving public health and helping address climate change by reducing carbon emissions and pollutants such as particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, ozone and sulphur dioxide produced by people travelling to and around Essex.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify opportunities for improved vehicle technology and modal shift

29 The measures and facilities to deliver these are set out in the scheme below.

30 The expectation is that future schemes will emerge from the network reviews and potentially for cross border services.

31 Discussions have been undertaken with all neighbouring authorities and cross boundary services and co-operation will form a significant part of the network reviews.

PART 2 – EP SCHEME

THE ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP SCHEME FOR BUSES IS MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 138G(1) OF THE TRANSPORT ACT 2000 BY ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

EP Scheme Content

- 1 This document fulfils the statutory requirements for an EP Scheme. In accordance with statutory requirements in section 138 of the Transport Act 2000, the EP Scheme document will set out:

Section 2 - Scope of the Scheme and commencement date

Section 3 - Obligations on the Authority

Section 4 - Obligations on Local Bus Operators

Section 5 – Governance Arrangements

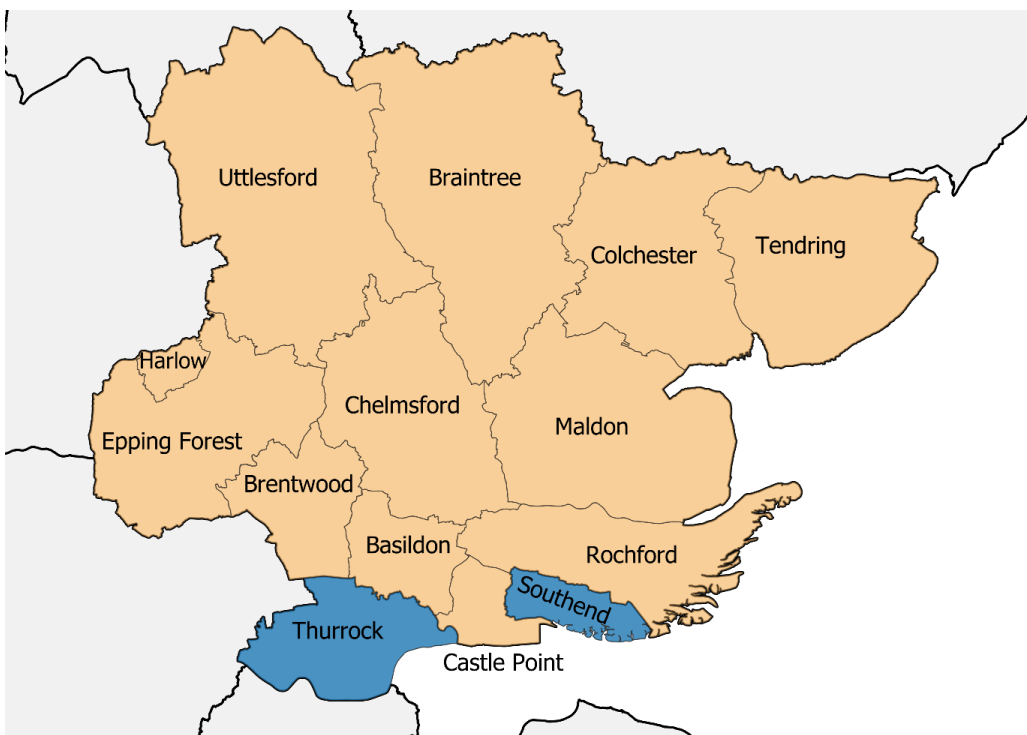
- 2 This document should be considered alongside the associated Enhanced Partnership Plan.
- 3 The EP Scheme has been jointly developed by Essex County Council and those bus operators that provide local bus services in the EP Scheme area. It sets out obligations and requirements on both the local transport authority and operators of local services in order to achieve the intended improvements, with the aim of delivering the objectives of the associated EP Plan.

Scope of the EP Scheme and Commencement Date

Description of Geographical Coverage

- 4 The EP Scheme will support the improvement of all local bus services operating in the following areas (excluding those run by Transport for London which will be subject to a separate Enhanced Partnership scheme):

The administrative county of Essex as shown below:



5 The administrative county of Essex excludes Southend and Thurrock Unitary Authorities but includes the following City, Borough and District Councils:

1. Uttlesford District Council
2. Braintree District Council
3. Colchester Borough Council
4. Tendring District Council
5. Harlow District Council
6. Epping Forest District Council
7. Chelmsford City Council
8. Maldon District Council
9. Brentwood Borough Council
10. Basildon Borough Council
11. Rochford District Council
12. Castlepoint District Council

6 The Enhanced Partnership Scheme covers the same geographical area as the Enhanced Partnership Plan.

Commencement Date

7 The EP Plan and scheme are made on ***[TBA but the date will be the March meeting of the ECC Cabinet once the decision has cleared call-in].***

8 The EP Scheme will have no specific end date but will be reviewed by Essex County Council annually as set out in Section 5.

Exempted Services

9 Services operated by Transport for London are exempted from this scheme.

Section 3 - Obligations on Essex County Council

10 The scheme places the following obligations on Essex County Council:

Facility	Responsibility	Action	Delivery date
A set of facilities as set out at annex A to this scheme	Essex County Council	The provision of the listed facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">April 2023

Measure	Responsibility	Action	Delivery Date
A set of proposals to start to deliver Essex's Bus Service Improvement Plan	Essex County Council	ECC in partnership with operators to develop the five transformation proposals set out in annex B to this scheme. ECC to seek investment from DfT. Delivery is dependent on funding from DfT.	Ongoing
Improvements to customer information	Essex County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none">To develop a single Essex brand for the bus network and	<ul style="list-style-type: none">July 2022

and the accessibility and attractiveness of bus travel		<p>to use it on ECC digital and physical assets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop a single branded portal which includes links to bus information, journey planning tools, maps, bus stop information • To develop and launch a joint marketing campaign with operators by October 2022 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 2022 • October 2022
To progress improvements to the supported local bus network in Essex	Essex County Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial proposals relating to Uttlesford are set out in annex C. These proposals will need to be subject to consultation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2023
A wholesale review of the commercial and supported networks, including ticketing and fares and vehicle standards.	Essex County Council	<p>The diversity of the Essex networks means that not all of the following will be applicable, however the reviews will consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple flat or zonal fares within towns and cities • Bus priority measures • Control of roadworks • Bus lanes on roads with space where there are frequent bus services and congestion • Traffic signal priority • Bus gates • Signage • Sustainable travel corridors • Bus stations • Park and Ride • Turn up and go services on urban routes, running at frequencies at which no timetable is required, plus evening/Sunday provision • Solutions for rural areas • Hub models • Linkage to railway stations, schools, health, social care and employment, isolated housing , out of town industrial estates, factories, estates • Hub and spoke and feeder service models • Route simplification • Demand responsive models • Options for improving punctuality and reliability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • December 2022

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting daytime, evening and Sunday service levels • Consistency of routes into evenings and weekends <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle standards • Fully meeting latest accessibility standards • Provision of visible and audible information • Wifi and charging on key routes • Parking provision 	
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Section 4 - Obligations on Local Bus Operators

11 The scheme places the following obligations on operators.

Measure	Responsibility	Action	Delivery Date
To improve customer information and make bus travel more accessible and attractive	Operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To engage with the development of the single Essex brand • To use the brand on digital and physical assets (e.g. buses) in a light touch way e.g. vinyls not wholesale re-livery and at a suitable and agreed scale • To provide suitable material and links as agreed to populate the Essex information portal • To develop and launch a joint marketing campaign with ECC • To develop and implement a Bus Passenger Charter • To agree a set of common network/timetable/registration change dates per year. Where cross boundary services also form the majority of services in a neighbouring local transport authority the aim would be to align these common dates. Where a neighbouring local transport authority has differing common dates exceptions would be made for cross boundary services if necessary although alignment would be preferred. • When making registration changes to use a common name for bus stops ensuring the ECC database reflects that name and any naming conflict between the two is resolved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • July 2022 • April 2023 • October 2022 • October 2022 • July 2022 • July 2022 • Ongoing

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To remove duplicate numbering on any services that run in the same district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> October 2022
To work jointly with ECC on the network, ticketing and vehicle standards review	Operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To work jointly on the network reviews as set out in the authority obligations summary in section 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> December 2022
To make improvements to ticketing options and information	Operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make All Essex Saver and All Essex Sunday Saver readily available on all ticketing platforms and to publicise the ticket (with a review of operation and apportionment by July 2023) To standardise the child fare at 16 years as of 31 August in a year (to allow older year 11s to qualify) where a separate child fare is charged 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> July 2022
Reinvesting in an improved network	Operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where highway network changes are made that result in resource savings as a result of faster journey times operators will reinvest a proportion of the benefits in more frequent services, or new buses, or other improvements of mutually agreed value in conjunction with local network reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
Introducing cleaner vehicles	Operators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new buses are built to a minimum Euro VI emission standard. Where brand new vehicles are introduced within the County, their allocation will be cognisant of local air quality concerns as one of the factors considered within the operator's business case. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing

Section 5 – Governance Arrangements

12 There will be an Enhanced Partnership Management Board (EPMB). This group represents all the parties to the Enhanced Partnership. This is the Board which will formally make decisions on the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme. The role of the EPMB will be to:

- Oversee the delivery of the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme(s),
- Manage the relationship between the partners
- Identify priorities and aims/targets or future 'EP Schemes'
- Identify additional measures that the EP will need to take
- Identify any additional facilities required to meet the objectives of the EP

13 The EPMB will comprise:

- Chair: A Rotating Chair alternating between ECC and the three operator groups
- The Director of ECC Highways and Transport
- The Head of Integrated Passenger Transport Unit ECC
- Three representatives from the large bus operating companies (over 250 employees or over £50m turnover)
- Three representatives from Medium sized bus operating companies (50-250 employees or under £50m turnover)
- Three representatives from the small sized bus operating companies (50 employees or less or up to £2m turnover)

14 Guest attendees will be allowed at the discretion of the Board.

15 The Board will meet quarterly (January, March, June, September) with additional meetings at the discretion of the Board.

16 Papers will be circulated a week before the meeting. Action points and a summary of discussion will be recorded.

17 Material issues relevant to the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme will be shared with all operators in advance to allow operator representatives to consult with the wider operator cohort.

18 Decisions of substance or with financial impacts on the authority will be subject to the Essex County Council constitution and governance policies and processes.

Review of EP Scheme

19 Once the EP Scheme is made, it will be reviewed by the Board every six months following publication of data on progress towards targets, as required by the BSIP – this will ensure any necessary action is taken to deliver the targets set out in the BSIP. Essex County Council will initiate each review.

20 The Board can also decide to review specific elements of the scheme on an ad-hoc basis. Board members should contact the Essex County Council using the following email address: passenger.transport@essex.gov.uk explaining what the issue is and its urgency. ECC will then decide whether to table the issue at the next scheduled meeting or make arrangements for all or the necessary Board members to gather more quickly.

Bespoke Arrangements for Varying or Revoking the Enhanced Partnership Scheme

[DfT are intending to issue a standard variation/revocation mechanism and that will be used here when it is published. Therefore this wording could change. The principle however is that decisions to vary or revoke the EP Scheme can be made through a less onerous process than the fully statutory consultation and objection process]

21 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.

22 Changes to or new flexibility provisions under s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 shall only be included in the made EP scheme if they satisfy the statutory objection mechanism as set out in The Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018

Proposer of a variation or revocation

23 Consideration will be given to potential EP Scheme variations or a revocation highlighted either by a local authority, one of the organisations represented on the EPMB, or an operator of local bus services. The proposer of a variation or revocation 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 passenger.transport@essex.gov.uk . ECC will forward all requests onto all EPMB members within 5 working days.

Decision-making Process

- 24 On receipt of a request for a variation or a revocation of an EP Scheme, Essex County Council will convene the EPMB, giving at least 14 days' notice for the meeting, to consider the proposed variation or revocation proposal. If the proposed variation or revocation is agreed by all bus operator representatives present, and if Essex County Council also agrees, the EP Scheme variation or revocation will be made within seven working days and the revised EP scheme will be published on the ECC website; or a statement will be issued confirming that the scheme has been revoked. EPMB members that are absent or not expressing a view at the meeting (either in person or in writing) will be deemed to be abstaining from the decision.
- 25 If at any point in the future the EP scheme area is included in a bus franchising area, the relevant requirements set out in this EP scheme document will cease to apply from the commencement date of the franchising scheme.