

**Item 2**

4th October 2022



**Glasgow City Council**

**Environment, Sustainability & Carbon Reduction Committee**

**Report by Executive Director of Neighbourhoods,  
Regeneration and Sustainability**

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**UPDATE ON GLASGOW BUS PARTNERSHIP & BUS GOVERNANCE  
MATTERS IN GLASGOW**

**Purpose of Report:**

To update the Committee on progress within the Glasgow Bus Partnership including on Bus Partnership Fund projects, and update on bus governance issues including a bus governance routemap which is also linked to Clyde Metro.

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended Elected Members note the progress updates within this report in relation to the Bus Partnership and agrees to refer the bus governance routemap section of this paper to City Administration Committee for approval.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes  No  X      consulted: Yes  No

## 1. Introduction and context

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on progress with regards to bus-related matters in Glasgow, specifically workstreams under Glasgow Bus Partnership as well as next steps on exploring bus governance options in the city and moving forward on Glasgow Transport Strategy policy on buses.
- 1.2 Glasgow City Council published a [Glasgow Transport Strategy Policy Framework](#) in 2022. This sets out a policy framework to work towards a sustainable transport future in the city, and an integrated sustainable transport system is a key part of this vision. The Policy Framework was adopted by City Administration Committee in March 2022. Policy 17 of that document states:
- “Continue to work with partners to achieve and promote world class public transport to all users in Glasgow as a joined up, integrated and accessible system.”

Policy 18 specifically focuses on bus and says:

- “Continue to recognise the important role of bus services in Glasgow’s public transport system, particularly in supporting many diverse communities across the City. Work with partners to develop a bus network with:
    - faster bus journey time
    - fewer bus delays
    - a denser, more inclusive and safer bus network
    - cheaper, simpler and integrated bus fares
    - consistent, accessible and integrated journey information
    - a greener bus fleet.”
- 1.3 Glasgow City Council continues to deliver bus infrastructure enhancements in the city year on year, and is working through the Glasgow Bus Partnership currently to access valuable infrastructure funding as well as to secure wider benefits to bus users by improvements to services and fares.
- 1.4 In addition, the Clyde Metro concept has emerged from the Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR2). This will be a transformational public transport scheme in Glasgow and the wider region, and will require an integrated, sustainable transport system to be in place.
- 1.5 In terms of the current situation, buses currently operate in a deregulated, commercial market in Glasgow and the SPT area. The responsibility for the provision of bus services therefore lies with the commercial bus market. A voluntary partnership exists, the Glasgow Bus Partnership (more below). SPT plays a role in filling gaps in the network through supported bus services. SPT’s Framework for Subsidising Local Bus Services is set out in the link below<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.spt.co.uk/media/wjplw5eb/spt-framework-for-supporting-local-bus-services.pdf>, SPT Framework for Subsidising Local Bus Services, August 2021

This paper provides an update on progress and how we propose to move forward to deliver on the policies above.

## **2. The Glasgow Bus Partnership**

2.1 The Glasgow Bus Partnership (GBP) brings together as a voluntary partnership the eight Glasgow City Region local authorities, Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, bus operators (through their new alliance, GlasGo) and bus passenger representative groups. The purpose is to address current challenges to bus travel and to improve the passenger experience for communities across the Region. The Partnership has been in existence since 2020.

2.2 The aims of the GBP include:

- Improving bus priority mechanisms and reducing congestion to improve bus journey times and reliability
- Ensuring buses are given higher priority in any future city planning
- Improving the accuracy of real time passenger information and exploring options to introduce an integrated ticketing system

2.3 The GBP also supports the delivery of Glasgow's Low Emission Zone and brings together key partners to develop bus priority funding bids to Transport Scotland's Bus Partnership Fund.

2.4 The GBP comprises major bus operators in the city as well as representation from Community Transport Glasgow and Bus Users Scotland. Although Glasgow City Council provides Secretariat support for the GBP, and SPT and constituent local authorities are all members, it has an independent chair. Transport Scotland representatives sit as observers of the GBP, and are linked to the Bus Partnership Fund (see below). Meetings are held quarterly and all proceedings are transparently published at <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/glasgowbuspartnership>.

The Terms of Reference for the GBP are published on the website. They set out:

- The vision and objectives of the GBP – these are far-ranging and include securing funding as well as securing quality public transport bus services for passengers including reviewing frequencies, fares and facilities
- Membership of the GBP
- Secretariat
- Meetings and working groups
- Expectations around Participation, which includes “Members of the Group will ensure that their participation is supported by their respective organisations (governance) and that they are committed to working to agree a Bus Services Partnership Agreement”
- Key deliverables and performance indicators
- Sources of information
- Timescales, which notes “The Group will identify a timescale for a formal Bus Partnership Agreement.”

### **3. What has been achieved via the GBP so far.**

3.1 The Glasgow Bus Partnership has successfully applied for funding from the Transport Scotland Bus Partnership Fund (see next). Workstreams valuing £3.65m are now in the process of being delivered across the region and city.

3.2 To support the delivery of the Bus Partnership Fund, a number of workstreams have been set up:

- Workstream A: Development of Business Cases for route enhancements and new schemes,
- Workstream B: To oversee delivery of route enhancements,
- Workstream C: Vehicle Standards and Network Development
- Workstream D: Enforcement
- Workstream E: Integrated Ticketing & Fare Capping.
- Workstream F: Passenger Experience, Customer Service, Passenger Information, Public Relations & Promotions
- Workstream G: Data & Evaluation

These workstreams meet regularly and are chaired by members from across the Partnership.

3.3 The GlasGo Bus Alliance has been formed by leading bus operators in the City with the aim of transforming the bus travel experience for both residents and visitors to Glasgow and the surrounding areas. Further information can be found at <https://glasgobus.com/>. The Alliance produced a Manifesto which has made commitments including working with all operators and partners to introduce tap and cap ticketing schemes across all public transport.

3.4 Over the last 2 years, the Glasgow Bus Partnership has helped to enhance relationships, provide a forum for discussion of bus-related issues amongst all members and acts to champion public transport by bus in the city and the wider region. Some other elements of progress from across the Glasgow Bus Partnership includes:

- Investment in green/ low carbon vehicles within operator bus fleets (<https://glasgobus.com/first-bus-to-invest-35m-in-green-transport-for-glasgow-and-aberdeen-with-scotzeb-funding-from-transport-scotland/>)
- Introduction of tap on tap off machines on some First Glasgow vehicles, with a commitment to introduce this across all operators to support the introduction of multi-operator fare capping by end 2023
- The development of a GlasGo Bus app
- Review of real time passenger information at bus stops
- Passenger survey undertaken by the GlasGo Bus Alliance
- Productive discussions of parking enforcement and the role it plays in supporting bus journey time reliability
- Raising issues with Transport Scotland including the role concessionary fare reimbursement levels have on fare structures

#### 4. Bus Partnership Fund

- 4.1 The Scottish Government announced £500m of funding in 2019 for bus infrastructure measures to tackle the impacts of congestion on bus services and raise bus usage.
- 4.2 The Glasgow Bus Partnership worked together and with consultants to submit a substantial bid for funding from the associated Bus Partnership Fund. The region was allocated £3.655m in 2021 from the Fund to cover a 5 year period. From this sum, £1.655m was allocated for projects in Glasgow, for the following:
- Business case work on five corridors selected by Transport Scotland in Glasgow to identify bus priority interventions
  - A strategic piece of work on developing a vision for bus services in the city and region
  - Infrastructure enhancements in Paisley town centre, Hope Street and Howard Street in Glasgow
- 4.3 A report was approved by the [City Administration Committee](#) (CAC) on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2021 accepting the £3.65m funding from the Bus Partnership Fund.
- 4.4 In doing so, the CAC noted the requirement to have a Partnership in place as a prerequisite for submitting a capital bid; and the need to be working towards Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) status as defined by the Transport (Scotland) 2019 Act. This latter requirement was to ensure other bus service improvements can be levered through the process, such as measures around fares, cleaner vehicles, customer service, network coverage.
- 4.5 It should be noted there are two key measurables of the Bus Partnership Fund award – a target on improved bus patronage, and on bus journey time reliability.
- 4.6 As of October 2022, the following progress update can be provided on the £3.65m Bus Partnership Fund award to the Glasgow Bus Partnership.
- 4.7 Corridor appraisal business case work**
- External consultancies have been commissioned since early 2022 to undertake business case and option appraisal work on five corridors in Glasgow, as awarded under the Bus Partnership Fund:
- **Paisley Road West**; (Central Station to Paisley Gilmour Street Station) – within Glasgow City Council and Renfrewshire Council
  - **Dumbarton Road**; (Clydebank Railway Station to High St Station) - within Glasgow City Council and West Dunbartonshire Council
  - **Maryhill Road**; (Bearsden Cross and From Boclair Rd via Canniesburn Toll to Glasgow Central Station) - within Glasgow City Council and East Dunbartonshire Council
  - **Great Western Road**; (Kilbowie Roundabout to High Street) - within Glasgow City Council and West Dunbartonshire Council

- **Pollokshaws Road** (Central Station to Shawlands then Pollokshaws Rd to Thornliebank Railway Station and Kilmarnock Road to Eastwood Toll) - within Glasgow City Council and East Renfrewshire Council.

4.8 To date, the work has produced:

- An Inception Note setting out the approach to the work
- A Case for Change report covering all corridors as part of the Strategic Business Case stage.
- Initial preliminary design options covering all corridors, presented to the Glasgow Bus Partnership meeting in August 2022.

4.9 Public and stakeholder engagement was carried out via the Council's Consultation Hub from Spring 2022, closing at the end of August 2022. This asked the public for their comments on issues affecting buses along the five corridors, and fed into the Case for Change report mentioned above. The next stage will involve more targeted consultation with communities along the corridors, seeking views on potential options for bus priority. This will include engagement via Area Partnerships and Community Councils along the routes, as well as local communities and businesses.

4.10 Overall, the work is aiming to complete in late Spring 2023 and will produce:

- Strategic Business Case
- Outline Business Case
- Corridor Concept Design

4.11 The Glasgow Bus Partnership will use the emerging outputs from the work to apply for further funding from the Transport Scotland Bus Partnership Fund to progress Corridor Concept Designs to Preliminary Design, Detailed Design and then preparation for construction.

4.12 ***Streetspace Allocation Framework***

As part of the corridor appraisal work, consultants have been preparing a Streetspace Allocation Framework for Glasgow. This aims to identify primary and secondary networks by mode in the city, identify any spatial constraints and conflict points to delivering on aspirations for roadspace reallocation to sustainable modes such as bus and cycle networks, and proposed a framework for decision-making. This has been presented to Council Officers in draft format, and will inform the Glasgow Transport Strategy Part 2, Spatial Development Framework, in 2023.

4.13 ***Infrastructure improvements***

Progress is being made on the development of proposals for bus priority in Hope Street, and this element of the BPF work has been combined with an SPT-funded bus priority project led by GCC Consultancy Services to create a bus-based Avenue in Hope Street. Howard Street signal enhancements to give priority to buses as part of the city's Bus Information & Signalling System is underway and waiting on the delivery of equipment.

#### 4.14 **Strategic bus network route plan and Strategic Business Case**

Funded by the BPF, work is being commissioned to develop a vision and proactive bus network plan for Glasgow and the city region. This work is co-commissioned by Glasgow City Council and SPT on behalf of surrounding local authorities, and aims to set out the type and level of bus services we need up to c2030, with cognizance to the development of the Clyde Metro concept and future-proofing the public transport system.

### 5. **Update on Transport (Scotland) 2019 bus governance provisions and development of a routemap in Glasgow**

#### 5.1 **Previous work on bus governance in Glasgow and the wider region**

As previously reported to Elected Members in early 2022 as part of an update on the Glasgow Transport Strategy Policy Framework, Glasgow City Council and SPT co-commissioned scoping work on bus governance options in Glasgow and the SPT area. The report can be read [here](#) and the content is not repeated below, though in summary:

- Voluntary partnerships play a role where there are modest ambitions.
- In local authority areas where the Bus Partnership Fund will make significant improvements to bus journey times and bus delays, a Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) is recommended to formalise and “lock in” commitments to deliver the infrastructure and complementary improvements to bus operators' services, fares and vehicles
- In the longer term, a Bus Franchising Scheme has the potential to offer a 'single integrated decision maker' that can source funding and deliver a world class bus service. A Bus Franchising Scheme can integrate with wider investment in public transport corridors (e.g. Glasgow Metro). However this relies on untested legislation that will cost the local transport authority £4-15m to build a business case, could take at least 7 years to implement and pose significant new risks to local transport authorities.
- Where competition for bus service contracts is weak, local authorities should consider the formation of a municipally owned bus operator. In the longer term, a municipally owned bus operator could in theory deliver all buses in a local authority area or the region, offering integrating decision making with all profits invested back into services. This would most likely require local authorities to acquire the businesses of today's commercial operators.
- Each of these options require significant amounts of investment, from c£1.5m to set up and then £100k annually to run a single authority BSIP – to c£4-15m to set up a bus franchising scheme, depending on the scope. Acquiring bus operators in the region to run municipally-owned bus services could cost c£200m (excludes ongoing revenue costs of operations). Each also carries varying degrees of risk.

#### 5.2 **Implementation of the bus provisions under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019**

In terms of the bus provisions of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019, only the municipal bus element of the legislation has been enacted to date. The remaining elements on BSIPs and franchising are not expected until 2023 at the earliest. It should therefore be noted that any substantive work on these elements in advance of regulations and guidance being published is at risk to a

degree (that is, at risk of being abortive work if not precisely aligned to published regulations and guidance).

5.3 It should be noted that Transport Scotland have expressed an intention to introduce a Community Bus Fund to support local transport authorities to explore the options in the Transport Act, and to improve public transport in their areas. This fund is currently awaiting funding confirmation.

5.4 ***Glasgow City Council approach to bus governance***

The Glasgow Transport Strategy: Policy Framework sets out the following adopted policy:

“Policy 19: The Council will continue to explore alternative options for bus governance in Glasgow in line with the options laid out in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 – these are the formation of a municipal bus company, the development of a bus franchising system and development of a statutory Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP). A number of principles will be applied to this exploration of options:

- Any statutory BSIP will be for a time limited period with agreed targets and outcomes which will be subject to monitoring and evaluation. If these are not achieved to the satisfaction of all parties, other governance options may be considered.
- Any investment by public transport operators, SPT, the Council and other bodies in improving bus services in Glasgow for citizens will be built upon, as these improvements are needed regardless of which governance model is adopted in the long-term.
- Additional capital and revenue funding is likely to be required from the Scottish Government/ Transport Scotland to make any change in bus governance feasible.”

5.5 It is now proposed to set out next steps on building on and taking forward this approved policy.

5.6 Since Glasgow City Council elections in 2022, there exists clear political will to undertake work to explore the use of the powers of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019, and to exert further public influence over buses if this achieves a world class public transport system. The Systra report referenced above also sets out a number of steps the Council could consider progressing with.

5.7 There is a desire to fully explore what alternative forms of bus governance look like to achieve the GTS policy of a world class public transport system and to support and underpin Clyde Metro objectives of an integrated, sustainable transport system. Both franchising and municipal bus operations governance options can be explored, and work is now needed to explore a business case that seeks to take advantage of both of these options. The Council will now actively engage with Scottish Government and other relevant partners including SPT about securing funding for, and initiating work on, the development of business cases. The Systra report noted it could take £4-15m to build a business case for franchising by a local transport authority. It is hoped to apply for funding to start exploring business cases for governance changes in a



phased approach. This work would also look at the best geographical scale for any potential governance changes.

- 5.8 As noted above however, BSIP and franchising elements of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 are not yet enacted, and not expected to be until 2023 at the earliest.
- 5.9 Further exploration of these options represents a significant body of work and will require appropriate funding commitments and development oversight. Subject to the receipt of funding and implementation of Act elements in 2023, it is aimed to start work on business case and evidence around municipal operations and franchising. It should be noted however that this work must follow due legal process and a robust business case for change must be made before any decisions are made to change bus governance arrangements in the city.
- 5.10 In parallel, and in recognition of the fact that the development of a franchising/municipal bus operations business case and any subsequent implementation of such a model would likely take a number of years to complete, the Council proposes to move forward on initiating discussions on the nature and form of a potential, time-limited Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) via the Glasgow Bus Partnership. These exploratory discussions are an important step in any local transport authority decision to initiate a BSIP. The decision to initiate a BSIP must be made by a local transport authority, and Glasgow can do this as a local transport authority under the legislation. However, further work is required to explore the spatial coverage of any BSIP or BSIPs in the city e.g. city wide v. corridors, and this will be initiated subject to funding in 2023/24. It should be noted it may be in the best interests of bus users in the city region for the impact of any BSIP to tackle cross-boundary travel patterns. This would require further discussion and cooperation with SPT & neighbouring authorities.
- 5.11 As the Systra report notes and as required by Bus Partnership Fund criteria, a BSIP aims to lock in the benefits of investment and secure matched contributions from all partners, including bus operators. This BSIP could run for at least 3 years, and potentially up to 5 subject to monitoring and performance indicators on all sides being satisfactorily met. A range of topics can be explored via a BSIP, relating to the objectives of the current Glasgow Bus Partnership as referenced earlier in this report including fares, facilities, frequencies.
- 5.12 Updates on the development of a bus governance business case and recommendations on the way forward will be brought before elected members during the course of the current Council term. Progress on exploratory discussions regarding a time-limited BSIP will also be reported to committee, with any decision to initiate a BSIP being required to be approved by the City Administration Committee.

In summary, the proposed routemap on bus governance is as follows:



- 2021/22: Systra research on bus governance options, co-commissioned by SPT and GCC & reported to ESCR & CAC early 2022 (complete)
- 2022: Initiate discussions with Scottish Government and stakeholders around funding for the development of a bus governance business case
- Proposed from 2022/23 onwards: Initiate exploratory discussions on the form and content of a potential BSIP to lock in benefits of the Bus Partnership Fund in Glasgow
- STPR2 concludes on Clyde Metro 2022/23 and ongoing governance work as part of the development of that project (subject to STPR2 announcement in early 2023)
- Proposed from 2023/24 & onwards: Further business case work on alternative bus governance options - subject to funding & subject to Act elements on franchising being implemented with associated guidance published
- Subject to funding and Act elements on BSIP being implemented in 2023/24, local transport authority to make a decision in 23/24 on whether to formally initiate a time-limited BSIP, and Officers to bring recommendation to Elected Members for decision

- Decision in current Council term on best form of governance to support integrated public transport system based on impact of BSIP/s (if relevant) and business case work
- Thereafter, further work on preferred bus governance option package aligned with Clyde Metro scheme & development of routemap to delivery to work towards the goal of an integrated, affordable, sustainable world class public transport system*

## 6. Policy and Resource Implications

### Resource Implications:

#### *Financial:*

A BSIP would impose additional costs on the local transport authority to manage the Partnership work and progress reporting. This is estimated to be £50-100k per annum for a single authority BSIP, and it is understood the Transport Bus Partnership Fund cannot be

used for this purpose. Establishing a Bus Franchising Scheme is estimated to cost between £4m and £15m over a seven year period. In relation to municipal bus services, in the short term, the feasibility of funding the establishment of a depot, management team, staff and vehicles to deliver tendered service contracts is currently not quantified. In the longer term, the financial feasibility of a municipally-owned bus operator delivering all bus services is to be determined – it would require at least £200m to finance acquisition of operators' businesses in the region. Any requirement to commit finances to bus governance options will be brought to CAC for approval.

*Legal:* Full legal process must be followed for any changes to bus governance – this paper does not constitute a decision but sets out longer term aspirations which must be subject to due process and a robust business case being made.

*Personnel:* Additional external funding is likely to be required from 23/24 onwards to provide staff resources to develop a Bus Services Improvement Partnership.

*Procurement:* It is likely there will be further procurement activity in relation to Bus Services Improvement Partnership as well as the delivery of bus priority infrastructure from 23/24 onwards.

### **Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:**

*Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.*

Yes, the Equality Impact Assessment screening for the Glasgow Transport Strategy highlights the important role of bus for populations with protected characteristics, and any work to improve the bus network will therefore benefit these populations. In addition, almost half of households in Glasgow do not have access to a car and there is a correlation between these households and low income levels.

*What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report?*

Positive impact.

*Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.*

Almost half of households in Glasgow do not have access to a car and there is a correlation between these households and low income levels. Any work to improve bus services therefore supports those who depend on them.

### **Climate Impacts:**

*Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:*

Yes, it links to Action 25 “Develop a Glasgow Bus Partnership in line with the provisions of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019” and Action 26 “Explore alternative options for bus delivery in Glasgow in line with those options laid out in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019.”

*What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?*

Public transport sits within the sustainable travel hierarchy above the private car, and is an important part of Glasgow’s sustainable transport future whereby less trips are made by car, and more by low carbon modes of walking, wheeling, cycling, public transport, shared transport & taxis.

*Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow’s net zero carbon target?*

Yes, through modal shift from the car and increased efficiency of the road network by mass movements in one vehicle which is a key purpose of public transport. Operators in Glasgow have been making progress in moving towards low carbon fleet options, in part related to the Council’s Low Emission Zone.

### **Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:**

## **7. Recommendations**

It is recommended Elected Members note the progress updates within this report in relation to the Bus Partnership and agrees to refer the bus governance routemap section of this paper to City Administration Committee for approval.