

Notes and Actions of Bus Enhanced Partnership Board Meeting, held at 13:00 on Thursday 9th April in Shire Hall, Gloucester.

Welcome, Introductions & Declarations

- Formal meeting opened with introductions and confirmation that there were **no declarations of interest**.
 - In attendance:
EP Board: Cllr Roger Whyborn (Chair for this meeting), Chris Hanson (representing Stagecoach West), Luke Marion (representing Pulhams and smaller operators)
GCC Officers: Tom Main, Orlagh Phipps, Richard Adams and Megan Toomer
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Actions from Previous Meeting

- Progress against previous actions discussed.
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Local Authority Bus Grant (LABG) 2026 and Beyond

- Cabinet decisions noted; funding acknowledged as multi-year, providing greater certainty.
 - Short-term service extensions (e.g. Robin) are in place while full tendered contracts are prepared.
 - No new funding decisions were sought at this meeting; discussion focused on **sequencing, prioritisation and future flexibility**.
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BSIP Communications Plan

- Early-stage draft comms plan discussed, building on the marketing and engagement workshop.
- Members stressed that several **positive deliverables are not yet well known**, particularly:
 - The countywide bus network map
 - Robin
 - Service improvements already delivered
- Need identified for **stronger officer-linked comms support** and clearer political amplification.
- Opportunities highlighted for **place-based promotion** (Forest of Dean, Cotswolds) and rail integration messaging (e.g. GWR through-ticketing).

ACTIONS

- **GCC**
 - Develop a BSIP comms plan, including promotion of:
 - Countywide bus map
 - Robin
 - Entire bus network
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Multi-Operator Ticketing (Detailed Discussion)

- Initial product confirmed as a **day rover ticket**, available as:
 - Physical paper ticket
 - App-based ticket
- Revenue apportionment agreed in principle.
- Launch approach:
 - Do not delay for future technology (e.g. QR or full tap-on tap-off)
 - Prioritise clarity for drivers and passengers
- **Future phases** identified:
 - Weekly and monthly tickets
 - Hopper tickets (likely post tap-on/tap-off rollout)
- Strong emphasis on:
 - Clear branding and naming
 - Driver briefing at the right time (not too early)
 - Early communication with smaller and community operators

ACTIONS

- **ITU**
 - Complete consolidation of operator comments and return draft agreement to external legal advisers by end April.
 - Target agreement sign-off by **mid-May 2026** and ticket in use in time for the **school summer holidays**.
 - **Operators**
 - Prepare for technical testing and settlement checks post-agreement.
 - Develop clear driver briefing and rollout plan.
 - **ITU**
 - Progress name and branding development for the ticket.
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Express Bus & Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

- Express bus improvements discussed in both **service frequency** and **journey time reliability** terms.

- Operators highlighted specific congestion pinch points on the Gloucester–Cheltenham corridor.
- Agreement that operator insight and data need to better inform infrastructure priorities.
- BRT repositioned as a **longer-term strategic programme**, not just a BSIP project.
- Cheltenham town centre stopping and interchange arrangements identified as a priority area.

ACTIONS

- **Operators**
 - Share operator insight/data identifying key delay points and priority interventions on main corridors.
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Cheltenham Bus Stops & Town Centre Interchange

- Objective reiterated: a **clear, legible “spine” of stops** through central Cheltenham.
- Practical constraints acknowledged (space, layover needs, night-time safety).
- Background improvements underway (power, RTI connections).
- Further dedicated operator/officer discussions required to progress design and phasing.
- Aiming to make at least some changes by 31st May.

ACTIONS

- **ITU**
 - Progress Cheltenham interchange discussions with staged proposals.
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BSIP Targets & Programme Delivery

- BSIP programme overview:
 - 11 work packages
 - Approx. £6.3m capital programme
 - Target completion by March 2027
- Progress highlights:
 - Countywide bus map complete
 - Vehicle onboard upgrades funded
 - Bus priority schemes in design (notably Gloucester–Cheltenham corridor)
 - Interchange upgrades planned across multiple towns Dursley and Northleach suggested as future projects.
- UTrack:
 - Described as a step change in data quality (GPS, telematics, Wi-Fi integration)

- Will support reliability improvements, business cases, and passenger information
- Use enhanced data to inform future BSIP targets and interventions.

ACTIONS

- **Stagecoach**
 - Chase and enable access to UTrack data once live.
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Working Group Structure Update

- Agreement in principle to **restructure working groups**:
 - Multi-operator ticketing becomes a delivery workstream
 - Merge infrastructure and service improvement groups into one delivery-focused group
 - Retain Marketing & Engagement group
 - Establish a new **strategic future bus/rapid transit group**
- Strong support for introducing a **dedicated Safety & Accessibility Working Group**, covering:
 - Passenger and staff safety
 - Violence against women and girls
 - Accessibility and inclusivity
 - Stop and interchange safety

ACTIONS

- **GCC**
 - Confirm revised Working Group structure and terms of reference.
 - Establish a new **Safety & Accessibility Working Group**, including police, accessibility groups and operators.
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Passenger Survey (Transport Focus)

- Survey now a condition of LABG funding.
- Fieldwork beginning this month, initially focused on **bus stops**.
- Additional questions added on:
 - Accessibility
 - Awareness of Robin
- Members requested greater representation of **Forest of Dean** locations in future survey phases.
- Commitment made to keep operators informed so staff are prepared.

ACTIONS

- **GCC**
 - Confirm survey locations and timelines with operators.
 - Ensure Forest of Dean and other rural areas are included in future phases.
 - **Operators**
 - Cascade information to drivers and frontline staff.
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AOB

- **Gloucester Transport Hub safety concerns** raised as a priority.
 - Pedestrian conflict and lack of safe routes identified as urgent risks
 - Engagement with Gloucester City Council has proved difficult.
 - Proposal for a **high-level site meeting** involving County, City, operators and politicians
- **Passenger Forum** confirmed for **1 July 2026**
- Gloucester network review flagged (implementation planned for September 2026).

ACTIONS

- **Cllr Whyborn**
 - Request a high-level, on-site meeting with Gloucester City Council and operators to prioritise immediate safety risk mitigations and agree next steps, including facilities and RTPI.
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Dates

- Next EP Board: **Tuesday 6 October 2026 (1–3pm)**
- Next Forum: **Tuesday 12 January 2027 (1–3pm)**