

EXECUTIVE DECISION NOTICE

Date of Decision	20/03/2025
Decision Taker(s) Portfolio holder	Cllr. Jon Andrews
Designation	Cabinet Member, Place Services
Subject Matter	Bus Grant Funding 2025/26 Delivery Programme In November 2024 the Government announced £670m to enable local authorities to deliver their BSIP's. Dorset has been allocated £3,326,867 of Bus Grant funding for 2025/26, of which £2,006,762 is capital and £1,320,105 is revenue. Release of the funding by the Department for Transport is conditional on submission of a Delivery Plan which lists the schemes to be delivered with this funding. The delivery plan has been approved by the Enhanced Partnership at a Board meeting Chaired by Cllr. Jon Andrews on the 20th March 2025. The delivery programme will be published on the council website at - Bus Service Improvement Plan - Dorset Council
Decision	To give final approval of the decision of the Enhanced Partnership Board to: i. Commit £1,320,105 revenue bus grant funding to the schemes listed in Appendix A ii. Commit £1,355,049 capital bus grant funding to the schemes listed in Appendix B iii. Submit the 2025/26 delivery programme to the Department for Transport to release the Bus Grant funding iv. Make an application to the Department for Transport to transfer the remaining £651,713 capital to revenue to support the priority of improving local bus services

Reason for the Decision	To commit Bus Grant funds to deliver the 2025/26 delivery programme and submit the Delivery Plan to the Department for Transport.
Alternative Options considered and rejected	A number of schemes have been considered as part of the development of the delivery plan. Local bus operators and the council's public transport team were invited to submit proposals to improve the local bus network. 21 proposals were received. A total of £2.68m revenue funding was requested. It has therefore been necessary to shortlist revenue proposals. Capital funding proposals submitted totalled £1.36m. All proposals were assessed on their individual merits with consideration given to the following factors: a) Area of impact b) BSIP objectives met c) Expected benefits d) Long term viability (revenue only) e) Financial risk to the council f) Financial ask Schemes that could not demonstrate value for money or long-term sustainability without significant ongoing support being required were discounted. Schemes that were rejected for this Bus Grant funding round will be further discussed by the Enhanced Bus Partnership with more detailed service reviews completed ahead of being reconsidered for future rounds of funding should it be available.
Consultees	The Enhanced Partnership Board, consisting of: Cllr Jon Andrews, Cabinet Member for Place Services and Chair of the Enhanced Partnership Board Cllr. Derek Beer, Chair of the Bus User and Stakeholder Group Jack Wiltshire, Corporate Director Highways & Engineering Mike Garity, Corporate Director - Planning Sue McGowan, Head of Dorset Travel Local Bus Operators: First Bus, Go South Coast, South West Coaches and Dorset Community Transport Council Officers: Vicky Diaz, Service Manager for Travel Operations Adrian Glover, Public Transport Manager Owen Clark, Strategic and Policy Team Manager

	Debbie Fiddik, BSIP and Enhanced Partnership Officer Adan Jones, Accountant (Place)
Budget Implications	The costs of the 2025/26 programme are met through the allocation of Bus Grant funding. Funding awards will be subject to the conditions of the funders and value of the funds available.
Legal Implications	The Programme is developed in conjunction with the Enhanced Partnership Board. The Enhanced Partnership is a statutory arrangement created by the Bus Services Act 2017. All parties have a strong commitment to joint working.
Any Conflict of Interest?	None identified.
Reference Documents	

Signed: Cllr J Andrews **Date:** 20 March 2025

Designation: Cabinet Member for Place

Appendix A - 2025/26 Delivery Plan – Revenue

Category	Scheme Title	Description
Bus service support/network development	Service 2 enhancement (Weymouth – Littlemoor)	Enhancement and diversion of service 2 (Weymouth – Littlemoor) to operate via the Mount Pleasant Park and ride every 15 minutes Monday-Saturday and every 20 minutes on Sundays. The service will maintain this frequency year-round.
Bus service support/network development	Service 10 enhancement (Weymouth – Dorchester)	Weekend service levels enhanced to provide journeys every 15 minutes on Saturdays and every 20 minutes on Sundays year-round. Through travel to Portland improved.
Bus service support/network development	Service 13 (Bournemouth – Wimborne)	Joint funding of cross boundary service in conjunction with BCP Council to maintain enhanced service frequency and other improvements delivered through the BCP BSIP from Feb'24 onwards.
Bus service support/network development	New community transport service	Support to pilot enhanced community transport provision.
Bus service support/network development	Support to maintain the existing Core Route network	External funding to supplement council 2025/26 budget associated with the provision of CR network of 8 socially necessary services
Bus service support/network development	CR6 enhancement (Bridport – Yeovil)	Introduction of Saturday services matching Mon-Fri frequencies and extend some of the short journeys to their full length to improve the opportunities to travel into the towns and get back.
Bus service support/network development	CR2 & CR3 enhancement (Gillingham – Shaftesbury & Sturminster Newton)	Introduction of Saturday services matching Mon-Fri frequencies and retiming of weekday service to improve connections in Gillingham.

Appendix B – 2025/26 Delivery Plan – Capital

Category	Scheme Title	Description
Bus stops/stations /interchanges	Real Time Information upgrade and expansion	Complete replacement of RTI units with modern devices and the introduction of colour information 'totems', reduction in the number of unmetered electrical connections.
Bus stops/stations /interchanges	Bus stop infrastructure renewal	Roadside infrastructure renewal of poles, flags, and shelters.
Vehicles	EV Pilot	To trail an EV minibuss for enhanced community transport provision.