Chapter 4: Improvement Programme 2025-29 Subject to External Government Funding

The below table details a high-level initiative programme for buses which KCC and operators would look to deliver during the 2025-29 period, should additional external funding be made available by Government through the National Bus Strategy process. The initiatives seek to build on the current position detailed in chapters 2 and 3 and follow on from Kent's funded BSIP programme for 23/24 and 24/25.

A series of initiatives are proposed for a range of key areas and seek to be pragmatic with respect to the current industry position but to also highlight the ambition Kent has for buses should a long-term funding solution be forthcoming from Government. Included costs are high level and estimations and would be subject to full analysis and business case production should funding become available.
The initiatives would offer significant benefit to passengers and align with the Government's vision set out in the National Bus Strategy and subsequent 2024 BSIP guidance.

Network Development – Network Planning and Improvements to Bus Services

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?	Estimated Capital Funding Required	Estimated Revenue Funding Required (Per Annum)
NDI1	KCC will secure ongoing funding that will enable the Council to work in conjunction with bus operators to protect the existing network, sustaining services currently supported through BSIP and BSIP+ funding.	YES	£0	£4.5m
NDI2	KCC will work in conjunction with network operators to review the possibility of growing the rebased bus network, reintroducing services and improving frequencies, and introducing a more expansive evening and weekend network of buses on identified strategic bus corridors where	YES	£0	£3m

	there is new optimism for patronage growth and future sustainability.			
NDI3	KCC will use the results of the Bus Connectivity Assessment complimented by analysis of outputs from the Network Planning tool to increase the proportion of Kent households with access to; business, healthcare, work, education, retail and leisure destinations within 30 minutes of bus travel.	YES	£0	£10m
NDI4	KCC will look to use its BSIP and any associated funding to support the key aspirations of more localized bus strategies and sustainable transport strategies forming part of District Council's Local Plans such as the Canterbury Bus Strategy, the Ebbsfleet Sustainable Travel Strategy and the Tunbridge Wells Bus Strategy.	YES	£0	£5m
NDI5	Secure the long-term access and use of a Network planning tool to continue to inform future BSIP reviews and responses to Bus Connectivity Audits.	YES	£0	£50k
NDI6	Strengthen data collection tools and processes to improve reporting, analysis, evaluation, and monitoring of network changes & improvements.	YES	£250k	£50k

Bus Priority and Highways Management

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?	Estimated Capital Funding Required	Estimated Revenue Funding Required (Per Annum)
BP1	To progress detailed feasibility reviews and subsequent delivery of bus priority schemes on bus corridors identified in *Chapter 2 – Current Offer to Bus Passengers*. Many of these sites were also in Kent's 2021 BSIP but do not yet have funding. A detailed review will be required to ensure the sites provide practical support in line with The Plan for Drivers and DfT guidance. Identified corridors include: (Gravesend- Chalk, Swanscombe- Horns Cross, Dartford East Hill, Tonbridge (Southborough), Maidstone- Loose Road, Maidstone- Sandling, Canterbury- Sturry, Ashford Town Centre)	YES	£2.5m per corridor	£500k per corridor one off funding for feasibility
BP2	To identify and deliver a further package of minor highway improvements which may be beneficial to operators (and provide reciprocal benefit) following feedback from existing Punctuality Improvement Partnership meetings.	YES	£400k (£100k to support PIPs per annum)	£30k
BP3	Work with Kent Borough Councils to use district Local Transport Plans and Strategies to identify additional locations (to BP1) for bus priority. Ensuring a well-rounded approach to transport	YES	£2.5m per bus priority site	£0

	which increases efficiency and impact. (e.g. Canterbury Bus Led Strategy)			
BP4	Develop understanding of alternative methods of innovative data capture (such as mobile network data, real time sensors and BODS reliability outputs) to identify additional bus priority locations to BP1 & BP 3. Focus on those areas where delays exist but may be underrepresented by those experiencing delays and areas which improve bus operating speed and punctuality – i.e. addressing BSIP Targets	YES	£520k (£130k pa)	£0
BP5	Using the Traffic Management Act 2006 Part 6 powers to continue carrying out ANPR enforcement to ensure effective and safe bus priority. Investigating ways other traffic restrictions may improve bus priority, such as yellow box junction enforcement.	YES	£400k	£100k
BP6	Increasing the inspection regime for temporary streetworks on bus routes to ensure works are completed without undue delay. Supporting the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 and managing pressures roadworks place on punctual bus movement.	YES	£100k	£100k
BP7	Installation of countywide RTIGXML Traffic Priority system. Enables bus ticket machines to provide our traffic light signals with real time location data to ensure priority through traffic light corridors.	YES	£600k Countywide	£200k
BP8	Explore innovative methods of enforcement of parking restrictions to promote compliance.	YES	£400k	£200k

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?	Estimated Capital Funding Required	Estimated Revenue Funding Required (Per Annum)
BP9	Parking policy and countywide strategy between district councils. Supporting district councils in retaining civil enforcement officers and attracting strong employment.	YES	£0	£480k

Fares and Ticketing

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?	Estimated Capital Funding Required	Estimated Revenue Funding Required (Per Annum)
FT1	Develop a network of multi-operator ticketing zones in the County using the Project Coral back office and EMV cards or M-ticketing with bar codes. Would need some expert resource if setup is not part of the Project Coral package. Assumes pricing at commercial fare levels if funding to reduce prices is not available. See below for funded offers.	YES	£0	£150k
FT1A	Introduce a maximum day ticket fare across the County. This could replace the Discovery Ticket for travel within Kent and would affect top end single fares if the fare cap ceases.	YES	£0	£850k
FT1B	Introduce local daily fare zones around Kent's major towns. Potential for flat fares if the fare cap ceases. The level of fare discount will depend on future stability and the level of support available. Priority for Thanet (Superbus) and West Kent (larger number of operators).	YES	£0	£1m

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?	Estimated Capital Funding Required	Estimated Revenue Funding Required (Per Annum)
FT2	Support Home to School travel on the bus network with innovative ticketing pricing solutions.	YES	£0	£2.5m
FT3	MaaS expansion to the rest of Kent if it is sustainable or cost neutral after the set up and introductory period.	YES	£800k	£750k
FT4	Ticketing provision trial in Bus / Travel Hubs to speed bus boarding times. Simple EMV purchase of most popular tickets.	YES	£500k	£50k
FT5	Expand the successful bus/ rail plus bus ticket scheme to include, for example, stations in Swale and to relaunch the scheme to enhance its promotion.	YES	£0	£50k

Waiting and Interchange Facilities

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?	Estimated Capital Funding Required	Estimated Revenue Funding Required (Per Annum)
WI1	Using the bus stop hierarchy produced in 23/24 as a base, build on information currently available to produce a full asset database for each marked bus stop in the county. Subsequently seek to deliver improvements using this hierarchy as a base, including improvements to	YES	£1.5m	£75k (one off cost for survey) £100k (ongoing maintenance for

	overall accessibility to the bus network, facility levels in terms of information, connectivity with other travel modes etc. Consider locations for upgrade to Travel Hubs under this analysis.			**any identified travel hubs**
WI2	KCC will seek to roll out successful technology trials introduced at bus stops using 24/25 BSIP funding at locations across Kent, utilising the bus stop hierarchy to inform this. Further technology trials will be pursued as new advancements are made.	**YES**	**£1m**	**£200k** **£100k per annum for further trials**
WI 3	Work collaboratively with Parish Councils to Improve passenger experience and safety in rural villages through technological innovation. This will include the provision of battery powered real-time information and solar-powered lighting at key rural locations.	**YES**	**£500k**	**£120k**
WI 4	KCC will look to identify and engage with key tourist destinations to improve the infrastructure offer at these locations, increasing attractiveness of using sustainable travel to these locations and raising awareness through branding.	**YES**	**£1.2m**	**£300k**
WI 5	Following the rollout of a number Real-Time Information screens in 23/24 and 24/25, KCC will continue the rollout of improved passenger digital information utilising its 'Bus Stop Hierarchy'. Consideration will be given to how integration can be maximised through this work – e.g. potential for screens at rail stations / health care centres etc.	**YES**	**£1.5m**	**£200k**
WI 6	KCC will engage with Kent Police to identify crime hotspots in the county. KCC will conduct a			

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?	Estimated Capital Funding Required	Estimated Revenue Funding Required (Per Annum)
	feasibility study identifying potential improvements to passenger safety, and the perception of passenger safety. This may include increased stop relocation, improved lighting in the area, working with District Councils to provide CCTV etc	YES	£500k	£100k
WI7	Continue to work in partnership with Southeastern, bus operators, Active Travel Schemes and local groups to improve Kent's transport cohesion. KCC will aim to create one travel hub for each EP area over the 25-29 BSIP period.	YES	£4.5m	£300k

Bus Information and Network Identity

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?	Estimated Capital Funding Required	Estimated Revenue Funding Required (Per Annum)
PTII 1	KCC and Kent's bus operators will proactively promote the bus network and the role of buses in supporting strategic priorities and other activity such as tourism, environmental benefits, road safety etc. We will work with key partners to ensure public transport is publicised. KCC will work with organisations such as Visit Kent, National Trust and Kent Country Parks to produce publicity informing the public of the sites of interest in Kent which can be accessed by bus.	YES	£0	£500k
PTII 2	KCC will Improve on street wayfinding signage between Bus, Rail and Ferry services to improve the ease of interchange between different modes.	YES	£400k	£0

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?	Estimated Capital Funding Required	Estimated Revenue Funding Required (Per Annum)
	This will include arrows and maps detailing the public transport infrastructure located nearby.			
PTII 3	KCC recognises that a significant number of residents are not able to access the improved digital journey information. KCC will look to utilise paper-based materials to support the publicity of BSIP funded initiatives and campaigns to encourage the use of the bus.	YES	£0	£50k
PTII 4	KCC will continue to provide and develop the interactive bus map provided with 23/24 BSIP funding (e.g. explore how fares information can be included from BODs)	YES	£0	£50k

Bus Passenger Experience – Passenger Charter

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?	Estimated Capital Funding Required	Estimated Revenue Funding Required (Per Annum)
BPE1	Using the principles of the Kent Bus Passenger Charter, develop the means in which feedback can be provided online by passengers to KCC and operators. Consider whether this can be aligned with KCC's Bus Information Portal (delivered with 23-24 BSIP funding)	YES	£50k	£20k
BPE2	Develop other physical means for passengers to provide feedback in line with the passenger charter – e.g. potential trial of feedback buttons on buses and ability to feedback issues / concerns	YES	£100k	£20k

	with infrastructure at travel hubs.			
BPE3	The support of an annual survey of passengers (and non-passengers) to understand levels of satisfaction and areas for development.	YES	£0	£50k

On Bus Accessibility, Inclusion, personal safety and security

The areas of accessibility, inclusion, safety and security including walking routes to bus stops and waiting facilities are covered within other initiative categories.

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?	Estimated Capital Funding Required	Estimated Revenue Funding Required (Per Annum)
OB1	Bus Driver Training – Work with SME operators to develop the training school and associated training materials, with an emphasis on passenger safety training and customer service.	YES	£100K	£100k

Environment and Improvements to the bus fleet

The estimated cost (when taking into account EAQI 1 below) of decarbonizing the rest of the all-day bus fleet (approx. 350 vehicles) and for moving to Euro 6 standard for peak only / school buses (approx. 250 vehicles) is £195m.

The related cost of electrification of operator depots is approximately £1.5m per site for larger operators and £0.7m per site for smaller / medium operators.

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?	Estimated Capital Funding Required	Estimated Revenue Funding Required (Per Annum)
EAQI 1	The introduction of zero emission buses (for all day workings) on priority corridors identified through KCC's Air Quality Management Area Hierarchy:			
	Upper Stone Street, Maidstone	**YES**	**£13.8m**	**£0**
	A2, Sittingbourne	**YES**	**£10.6m**	**£0**
	Dartford Town Centre	**YES**	**£10.6m**	**£0**
EAQI 2	Tendered services will invite bids for differing levels of emission standards, so that costs can be clearly identified.	**YES**	**£0**	**£750k**

Longer Term Transformation of the network – Alternative Delivery Models

Reference	Initiative Description	External Funding Required?	Estimated Capital Funding Required	Estimated Revenue Funding Required (Per Annum)
LTT1	**Dynamic Scheduling**. Use Fastrack and another high frequency service in the east of the county to test London style dynamic scheduling for one year outside of London on High Frequency services to improve reliability. Approval needed by the Traffic Commissioner. GAL will be able to do this easily as they already have the software and experience from TfL contracts.	YES	£60k	£100k
LTT2	**£1 Bus Travel for Amazon Prime Members.** Using the Fastrack network as a testbed, work with our partners at Amazon to measure the propensity for increased bus use with such app-based membership discounts.	YES	£100k	£500k
LTT4	**Bus Specific Town Planner / Developer Training** Design and implement a short training course for town planners and housing developers demonstrating the positive impact and necessary role buses must play in future design. With the ambition of future national adoption and mandatory status. With input from bus operators on optimal design.	YES	N/A	£100k

LTT5	**Growth of Fastrack BRT Concept:** Through utilising recommendations within the commissioned Fastrack Expansion Feasability Study, seek to develop and introduce the Fastrack model to other viable areas across the county.	**YES**	**£15m**	**£2.5m**