

From: David Brazier, Cabinet Member, Highways and Waste  
Simon Jones, Corporate Director, Growth, Environment & Transport

To: Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee – 3 November 2021

Decision No: N/A – For information only

Subject: **Decisions taken between Cabinet Committee Meetings**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

**Past Pathway of Paper:** Cabinet Member Decision

**Future Pathway of Paper:** N/A

**Electoral Division:** County-wide

**Summary:** The attached decision was taken between meetings of the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee as it could not be reasonably deferred to the next programmed meeting of the Cabinet Committee for the reasons set out in paragraph 2.3 below.

**Recommendation:**

The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to note that decision 21/00087: Bus Service Improvement Plan, was taken between meetings of the Cabinet Committee in accordance with the process set out in the Council's constitution.

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport has taken decision 21/00087 to agree to publish on the KCC website and submit to Department for Transport the pre-settlement funding version of Kent's Bus Service Improvement Plan.
- 1.2 The decision was taken between meetings of the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee, as it could not reasonably be deferred due to the reasons set out in paragraph 2.3 below.

**2. Background to decision**

- 2.1 On 15 March, the Department for Transport (DfT) published its National Bus Strategy, "*Bus Back Better*". The Strategy acknowledges the role the bus can play in achieving a net zero emission society and commits national government to supporting bus and bus rapid transit schemes.
- 2.2 Under the Strategy, to maintain access to current funding and also future funding opportunities, KCC as the Local Transport Authority was required to

commit to the introduction of Enhanced Partnerships with local bus operators by 1 July 2021 (Record of Decision 21/00043) and to publish a Bus Service Improvement Plan by 31<sup>st</sup> October 2021 (Record of Decision 21/00087). It is this timetable, and the potential impact on current and future funding that has required the decision to be taken before discussion by this Cabinet Committee.

- 2.3 On 29<sup>th</sup> October the Pre-settlement Bus Service Improvement Plan, was published on the KCC website and submitted to the DfT. The Plan sets out the aspirations and initiatives for KCC and its bus operators over the period of the National Bus Strategy to meet the objectives of the Strategy and acts as a bidding document to support the initiatives developed as part of the Plan.
- 2.4 Priorities and suggestions for service enhancements in the Plan have been informed via public consultation and workshops with District Councils and other stakeholders. Two KCC Member briefings have also been held.
- 2.5 At the current time as there is uncertainty on how much funding will be available to Kent, the plan includes measures which do and do not require government funding. It seeks to be ambitious but makes clear the reliance in many instances on Government funding. Bus operators would be expected to play their part with a share of investment as well, and this will be defined in the Enhanced Partnership.
- 2.6 Once DfT confirm the final funding settlement, there will be further consideration with the public and other key stakeholders concerning the prioritisation of initiatives for delivery and the content of a second (post funding settlement) version of the plan which will be used to inform the detail an Enhanced Partnership Plan to commence from April 2022, subject to a further decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member for Highways & Transport.

### 3. Recommendation(s)

The Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee is asked to note that decision 21/00087: Bus Service Improvement Plan, was taken between meetings of the Cabinet Committee in accordance with the process set out in the Council's constitution.

### 4. Background Documents

- Record of Decision: 21/00087: Bus Service Improvement Plan: [21/00087 Record of Decision](#)

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