

BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET

MINUTES OF COMMUNITIES, TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL MEETING

Monday, 14th September, 2015

Present:- **Councillors** John Bull, Brian Simmons, Peter Turner, Alan Hale, Neil Butters, Jonathan Carr, Dine Romero, David Veale (In place of Steve Jeffries) and Les Kew (In place of Mark Shelford)

16 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

17 EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

The Chairman drew attention to the emergency evacuation procedure.

18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Councillor Mark Shelford sent apologies (substituted by Councillor Les Kew) and Councillor Steve Jeffries sent apologies (substituted by Councillor David Veale).

Apologies from Cabinet Members Councillors Martin Veal and Anthony Clarke.

19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Brian Simmons declared an 'other' interest in Item 9 'Community Transport' as Chair of Keynsham and District Dial a Ride.

20 TO ANNOUNCE ANY URGENT BUSINESS AGREED BY THE CHAIRMAN

There was none.

21 ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC OR COUNCILLORS - TO RECEIVE DEPUTATIONS, STATEMENTS, PETITIONS OR QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE BUSINESS OF THIS MEETING

1. Mr Duncan Hounsell, Saltford Parish Councillor made a statement regarding Item 9 'Community Transport' regarding 'Fair funding for Community Transport Schemes in the BANES area' on behalf of Saltford Parish Council (*the statement is appended to these minutes and available on the Council's minute book held by Democratic Services*).

Councillor Romero asked that this be added to the future workplan for the Panel. Panel members agreed.

2. Mr David Redgewell – South West Transport Network made a statement regarding Metro West (*the statement is appended to these minutes and available on the Council's minute book held by Democratic Services*).

Councillor Butters asked that this authority keep in touch with the Joint West of England Group and maybe even have a representative visit the Panel. Councillor Bull explained that BANES do have three representatives on the West of England Group that Panel members could speak to.

3. Mr David Redgewell – South West Transport Network made some comments on Item 8 'Quality Contract Scheme for Buses'. He explained that he thought the time was right for a review but thinks it may be too restrictive and that it should also be looking into infrastructure for example Bath Bus Station is not owned by the Council, it has multi ownership. He went on to explain that he sits on Great Western working party and that there is not a joint unit of Local Authorities for information on buses.
4. Mr Van DuBose made a statement regarding Item 8 'Quality Contract Scheme for Buses' (QCS) (*the statement is appended to these minutes and available on the Council's minute book held by Democratic Services*).

Councillor Butters asked if any other parts of the country had pursued QCS successfully. Mr DuBose stated that only a few authorities have pursued it whereas in Europe the model is standard, he added that he hopes the Bus Bill will help. Councillor Carr asked if the Council has considered setting up its own bus company.

5. Mr D Baker made a statement regarding Item 11 'East of Bath Park and Ride'. (*the statement is appended to these minutes and available on the Council's minute book held by Democratic Services*).

Councillor Hale asked if Mr Baker's proposal should be consulted on. Peter Dawson – Group Manager Planning Policy and Transport explained that he is happy to receive Mr Baker's comments through the consultation which would be considered by the Cabinet in November 2015.

Councillor Romero asked if this option should be part of the consultation. The officer stated that if members of the public want the Cabinet to consider this scheme then they can respond to the consultation to communicate this.

22 MINUTES

The Panel confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting as a true record and they were duly signed by the Chairman.

23 QUALITY CONTRACT SCHEME FOR BUSES - TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The Chair invited Emma Bagley, Policy Development & Scrutiny Project Officer to introduce the report. The officer explained that this issue had come to the Panel as a result of a motion at a Council meeting in January 2015. The officer further explained that this report detailed the Terms of Reference for the Task and Finish Group which would report back to the Panel in January 2016.

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Bull explained that the job of the Panel today is to approve the Terms of Reference for the Task and Finish Group, he suggested that the Steering Group looks at the points raised by Mr DuBose at its meeting in October where they can then also consider whether the Terms of Reference need to be altered at all.

Councillor Romero asked what the next stage would be. The officer explained that the Task and Finish Group recommendations would come back to the Cabinet Member and one such recommendation may be a larger review. Councillor Bull added that a Task and Finish (T&F) Group only does a small scale investigation into the information available.

Councillor Romero explained her concern that Bath may miss the opportunity to work with others in the region if it does not link up with the Joint West of England work. The officer pointed to paragraph 3.8 in the Terms of Reference which states that the outcomes of the Task and Finish Group will potentially feed into the Joint Local Transport Plan and Joint West of England transport studies. David Redgewell stated that some important work would be done in Bristol in November this year. Councillor Bull explained that the T&F group are meeting in October and November and would have something ready. It was also noted that BANES Joint West of England representative Councillor Rob Appleyard was present at the meeting and he agreed to feed the Panel's discussion back.

Councillor Carr asked why this Panel was hearing about devolution third hand. Peter Dawson – Group Manager Planning, Policy and Transport explained that the Government have asked for proposals from transport bodies on devolution on a short timescale (December) but until the Government explain what devolution might mean, such transport bodies cannot properly discuss and comment. Councillor Kew stated that it was the job of the T&F Group to come back to the Panel with some answers. Councillor Carr asked that the document that is submitted to the Government also be circulated to this Panel.

Councillor Bull concluded that the T&F group can take their recommendations to the West of England and to this Panel.

It was **Resolved** that the Panel:

1. Request the Task and Finish group look at the points raised by Mr DuBose at its meeting in October where they can consider whether the Terms of Reference need to be altered at all;
2. Agree to undertake the review within the timescales set out in the Terms of Reference; and

3. Formally agree to the nomination of the following Members (Councillors Bull; Simmons; Butters and Carr) to form the T&F Group who will lead on co-ordinating the group's activities.

24 COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

The Chair invited Andy Strong – Public Transport Manager to introduce the report (*a copy of the report which was tabled at the meeting is now attached to the agenda papers for this meeting or available from Democratic Services*). The report covered the following:

- Background on Community Transport
- Current Issues
- Strategic Review
- Total Transport Pilot Fund
- Paper by Councillor Brian Simmons
- Recommendation

The officer addressed the points made under Item 6 by Mr Hounsell, he explained that relative funding should be covered by internal audit. He also recommended that the Panel receive a more substantial report in early 2016.

There was some discussion around the nature of the consultation on this issue. The officer explained that he would expect a consultant to speak to representatives of users (village agents) and transport providers. He explained that it was not possible to conduct a public consultation.

Councillor Turner explained that some elderly people in Bath have difficulties in booking transport. The officer asked the Councillor to make him aware of these issues.

Councillor Butters suggested that the Wellow scheme be looked at in this review. The officer agreed that this scheme is a good model.

Councillor Romero asked that the report in 2016 will have identified all the needs of the users. She also asked about submitting tenders for home to school transport and whether areas other than Chew Valley were being looked at. It was agreed that Councillor Simmons paper will be circulated to all Panel members. The officer explained that any scheme would need a relevant permit to bid for home to school transport contracts. The officer agreed that it was hoped that a good model could be established and set up elsewhere.

There was a long discussion around the pilot scheme and the strategic review. There were concerns on the length of time the consultation would take and Members were also concerned that public consultation should be carried out.

It was **Resolved** that:

- The Panel consider a full report on the outcomes of the current work on community transport at a meeting in January 2015; and

- As part of the total transport Pilot Fund, consultants Mott McDonald undertake public consultation and visits in the area.

25 COMMUNITY USE OF LIBRARIES - UPDATE

The Chair invited Ian Savigar – Divisional Director Customer Services to give a presentation to the Panel (*slides of the presentation are attached to the agenda papers for this meeting and held with Democratic Services*). The presentation covered the following:

- Libraries and Archives
- Statistics on Libraries
- Bath Central Library – List of Facilities
- Keynsham – List of Facilities
- Midsomer Norton Library – List of Facilities
- Available Across the Service
- Activities and Services
- Opportunities and Issues

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Hale asked how the figures on visitors are calculated. The officer explained that the figures include people using the library to borrow a book and using other facilities such as cafes. Councillor Hale has a concern that figures will be used to cut facilities in the future and sought assurance that we always compare like with like. Members discussed the raised visiting figures in Paulton library and the effect of having a café. The officer informed the Panel that visiting numbers had gone up when the opening hours of the library went up from 14 hours per week to 38 hours. Councillor Bull explained that the café subsidises the library. It was agreed that Paulton library is a good model.

Councillor Butters stated that he is interested to hear about a partner with regard to the mobile library service when this information is available. The officer explained that talks with providers are ongoing and he would report back when appropriate.

Councillor Bull stated that it was good to have an update on the library service.

26 EAST OF BATH PARK AND RIDE CONSULTATION UPDATE

The Chair invited Peter Dawson – Group Manager Planning Policy and Transport to introduce the report. The officer stated that he has been asked to carry out public consultation on 3 schemes. He stated that this is in line with the Council's policy for the last 15 years. He will publish the Mott McDonald report as soon as possible and is also happy to circulate Mr Baker's work (Item 6). He concluded that all of this information would inform the Cabinet's decision in November 2015.

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

Councillor Appleyard (Lambridge Ward) stated that the meadows proposal has been met with huge resistance locally and people see a rail and ride scheme as a viable solution. He spoke about the scheme put forward by Mr Baker (Item 6) and stated that there should be a 4th consultation option.

Councillor Hale asked the officer about the timescales of the schemes. The officer replied that it is envisaged that each of the three schemes would take 3-4 years. Regarding the option put forward by Mr Baker, parliamentary powers would have to be sought to get consent to move the railway line and build a multi-story car park. He explained that this level of consent could take a long time.

Councillor Carr asked if the public are aware of other options. The officer explained that yes, alternative options are shown in the appendix to the report.

Councillor Kew stated that 2 of the 3 sites are in public ownership and asked if there had been any discussions with the owners. The officer explained that they are considering their position, there have been conversations.

Councillor Butters stated that the Council should go the extra mile and get the right solution and not just the fastest solution.

Councillor Appleyard stated that a car park should not be put on the meadows especially after the bypass had already been built in the area.

After some further discussion, it was **Resolved** that:

- The Panel note the progress made on this work; and
- If the financial aspects of considering site H can be equated with the other sites then site H should be considered as a site for a Park and Ride to the East of Bath.

27 TRANSPORT STRATEGY FOR CHEW VALLEY AND SOMER VALLEY

The Chair invited Peter Dawson – Group Manager Planning Policy and Transport to introduce the report.

Panel members made the following points and asked the following questions:

In response to a question from Councillor Romero, the officer explained that there will be visits to the site.

Councillor Bull asked if the Radstock-Frome line is included, the officer explained that it was not as there were problems with opening that railway line. Councillor Bull also stated that partnerships should mention 'possible QCS schemes'.

Councillor Kew asked that Pensford and Temple Cloud be added.

The Panel noted that there would be a report in the new year.

28 CABINET MEMBER UPDATE

There was no Cabinet Member Update at this meeting.

Councillor Carr asked the following questions and the Panel noted that a written response would be given from the Strategic Director Louise Fradd.

What communication was sent to students entering the 6th form and their parents or guardians to explain the need to reapply for the home to school transport scheme and the additional fees involved?

What efforts were made, along with Chew Valley school and other schools using the scheme, to identify the numbers of students expected to need continued home to school and to prepare sufficient capacity for them in advance?

Why was the closing date for applications set before places were confirmed (deadline 20th June, GCSE results 20th August) and was an extension not made?

What additional capacity is available or being prepared for 6th form students who still require home to school transport in 6th form?

What was the policy reasoning for limiting free transport to under 16, and was this reviewed in light of change to compulsory education or training until 18 which came into force in 2013?

What are the resource implications of extending the free transport to 18?

29 PANEL WORKPLAN

The Panel agreed some amendments to the published workplan. The Panel agreed to look at the following items at it's future meetings:

16th November 2015

- Directorate Plans for Place and Resources
- Climate Change – Update on Targets
- Report on West of England Partnership
- Transport Strategy Update

11th January 2016

- River Safety – Overview and Update
- QCS for Buses Task and Finish Group Report

- Community Safety General Update (possible inclusion of Police representative invitee to talk about police staffing – Councillor Alan Hale request)
- Community Transport – Update

Items to be scheduled

- Kerbside collections and recycling (request Cllr Romero)

The Panel noted the workplan and suggested amendments.

The meeting ended at 5.30 pm

Chair(person)

Date Confirmed and Signed

Prepared by Democratic Services

My name is Duncan Hounsell. I am Chair of Saltford Parish Council and I am speaking on behalf of Saltford Parish Council. The Council believes that a fundamental review of how B&NES Council calculates the subsidy per passenger journey for Community Transport in the B&NES area is needed. Dial-a-Ride is a door to door fully accessible minibus service for those who cannot use conventional public transport. People use this service for shopping, attending appointments, visiting friends. It helps people take an active part in community life who would otherwise struggle. Keynsham and District Dial-a-Ride provides an excellent service over 8 hours of each working day. It serves not only urban Keynsham but also a large rural area covering villages such as Pensford and Timsbury. Passengers pay every trip but B&NES Council contributes a subsidy to help the community transport schemes provide vehicles and cover their costs. The subsidy from B&NES is based on historic allocations updated for inflation. The average subsidy per passenger journey for Keynsham and District Dial-a-Ride (KDDAR) is only £2.93 compared with £6.32 for the Midsomer Norton and Radstock Dial-a-Ride. The subsidy in Bath is £3.64. These figures are for April-September 2014 and are updated for inflation. The imbalance in subsidy between the Dial-a-Ride schemes is marked and KDDAR is losing out. This issue has been long overlooked by B&NES administrations of all colours and a review is overdue.

It is recognised nationally the contribution that community transport makes to the health and well-being of individuals in the community. The 2012 Dept of Health Social Care Act highlighted the role that community transport can play in this regard. Your new administration in B&NES gives an opportunity to look at this issue of funding afresh. All we ask is for fair funding that will encourage collaboration, efficiency and enterprise among **all** the community transport schemes. Keynsham and District Dial-a-Ride is valued immensely. It needs fair funding now as do all the community transport schemes. How can this be achieved? We believe that the different community transport schemes should be viewed as arms of the same provision in the B&NES area. In this way, villages that are not currently efficiently served can be. This simple change of viewpoint will encourage co-operation and collaboration between the different schemes. All schemes should receive equal treatment, have common auditing standards, and be accountable in the

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CT&E PDS Panel

Bus QCS Review

DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Van DuBose
van@fedubose.com
14 September 2015

Background

- Introduction: I am Van DuBose. I live in Bath but represent no organization or interest group. I provide informal, voluntary support and advice on Bath urban matters on which I have relevant background, including transport. Thank you, Cllr Bull for the opportunity to speak today
- I would also like to thank Cllr Bull for initiating this Project and to the Project Team for delivering it
- I would like to avoid prejudging the outcome of this QCS Review. However, the Review is both very important and very timely- for several reasons:
 - *It addresses Public Transport, a crucial omission from Bath Transport Strategy*
 - *Our current Bus model is dysfunctional and fails meet our transport policy objectives*
 - *QCS (or its Bus Bill equivalent) can potentially be funded by central government as part of regional devolution- the current bus subsidy falls to us to pay*
 - *Bath has the opportunity to take WoE regional leadership to transform bus services, potentially eventually hosting a WoE Combined Transport Authority*

Framework

- In finalizing the Review Terms of Reference I urge the Task and Finish Group and the Project Team to think carefully about the Review's Purpose and its Objectives
- You will find that if the mission is clear enough the solutions and answers usually become more obvious
- Purpose of the Review:
 - *Not whether QCS addresses the 'problems' with the status quo, BUT...*
 - *To give preliminary consideration to whether a bus quality contract scheme could be superior to the existing unregulated bus service in meeting transport policy objectives in Bath and North East Somerset*
- Objectives of the Review (four high level goals)
 - *Provide a framework for the evaluation of a QCS*
 - *Confirm specific transport policy objectives as criteria for comparing QCS with the existing bus model*
 - *Identify key issues that should be addressed in depth if further QCS investigation is pursued*
 - *Measure precisely the council's current annual net cost of bus services (the 'net subsidy')*
- The Relevant transport policy objectives come from the Bath Transport Strategy and are:
 - *Achieve significant modal shift from cars to buses to address congestion*
 - *Provide effective mobility to stakeholders without cars*
 - *Preserve council control over the net subsidy, either at current level or another specified level*

Key Issues to Address

- **Bus Network Design:**
 - *Central to the evaluation of QCS is the potentially significant impact of a bus network designed coherently and optimally to achieve explicit transport policy objectives*
 - *The existing bus service is a collection of ad hoc routes selected individually by bus operators without regard to public policy network objectives*
- **Fares and Pricing Strategy:**
 - *Urban bus operators have not yet embraced the innovative, demand-responsive fare and pricing strategies pioneered by leading airlines (e.g. easyJet) that deliver profound revenue and passenger volume benefits*
 - *In principle, bus services can enjoy the same revenue and volume uplift as do airlines from sophisticated pricing strategies*
 - *The Review must consider the potential impact that technology driven dynamic fares- fares low enough to just fill the buses could have on the financial performance of a QCS*
- **Concessionary Fares Regime:**
 - *Under a QCS with fixed price bus operator contracts incremental levels of concessionary passengers cause no incremental costs, yet they do create DfT revenue support paid to the QCS operator*
 - *The continued reliable growth in this segment of the bus market makes it a major factor in the financial viability of QCS*
- **Financial Analysis Format:**
 - *The financial analysis should compare the existing bus model with QCS under a hypothetical range of net subsidy levels*
 - *Methods will be needed to measure the expected impact on transport policy objectives under each scenario considered*
- **Embracing Technology:**
 - *Continued rapid technology advances make tomorrow's bus service significantly more efficient than today's*
 - *Real time information, automated ticketing, even driverless buses (with smaller buses and higher frequencies), for example, will create huge advantages for a QCS scheme able to take full advantage of technology*
- **Scale Economies:**
 - *The fixed cost of network design, pricing strategy development, bus contract regimes and overheads need to be spread over a large network to provide optimal value to the public*
- **Other Contract Bus Models:**
 - *Outside the UK the fixed contract bus model is the norm*
 - *Even the UK bus operators operate under fixed contracts in Europe and the US*
 - *The Review should study the experience of cities that operate contract models to learn from their successes and failures*
 - *Such case studies would also assist in understanding the relationship between the level of net subsidy and achieving transport policy objectives*
- **Competition for Bus Contracts**
 - *The success of QCS would depend critically upon success generating vigorous competition among bus operators for contracts*
 - *A competitive environment for contract negotiations depends in part upon having a sufficient number of qualified bidders, including some that do not currently operate in the UK*

Statement for CTE Panel – 14th September 2015 – David Redgewell

Bath and Mendip services out of Bath and Wells

We are concerned about graffiti, litter, clock not working and weeds at Wells Princes Road bus station.

The lack of bus services to Rode on the 267 Bath - Frome corridor and the need to divert more services into Rode for commuters, shoppers and visitors for evening events in Bath with services alternating between Beckington and Rode and to hold urgent meetings with First Group Regional Director Neal Barker and James Freeman, BANES & Faresaver Buses to set up a quality bus partnership between Bath and Frome.

Other services need improving 162 Frome-Shepton Mallet (morning and evening service and Saturday services), 184 Midsomer Norton-Frome via Coleford to provide Saturday services and through ticketing to Bath, 161 & 174 bus shelters and waiting facilities in Dinder, and provide later evening services on the 126 Wells-Weston-Super-Mare via Cheddar and the railway station, better bus/rail connections between Castle Cary and Frome, X34 Frome-Chippenham later evening services. Concern over the loss of the 716 Bath - Newbridge lunchtime services.

Bath bus station cafe needs reopening, CCTV needs fixing along with the main doors. There is a lack of public transport information at Bath and Wells bus stations. Improved signage required at Bath station between the bus and rail stations as part of the ongoing rail replacement services especially in April 2016 when the line is closed between Bath and Bristol for electrification work. Scrutiny meeting. Also, First Somerset leaflet fails to give details of 375/376 services to Wells via Whitchurch and Bristol.

KEYNSHAM

We are concerned at the loss of the 42 service from Keynsham to Bristol via Kingswood and Oldland Common due to Bitton railway bridge and the replacement being one bus an hour via Oldland and one bus via Kingswood to Southmead. Keynsham has no link to Oldland and Warmley on a Sunday. This is due to South Gloucestershire Council withdrawing funding from these routes on the Kingswood Town services.

We are also concerned over fare increases from 18th September across the region and the closure of the regional call centre in Southampton which means that future enquiries would have to be dealt at the regional call centre in ? Norwich (for First South and Wales).

Proper consultation by Somerset County Council about bus service changes in Mendip district.

The important issues regarding MetroWest rail Phase 2 to BANES are the main line from Frome and Westbury through Bath to Oldfield Park and Keynsham onwards to Bristol Temple Meads to Bristol Parkway. We do not want to see turnback services to Yate as we believe that services should continue to Gloucester, Cheltenham and Great Malvern for leisure tourism and commuting purposes.

David Redgewell (South West Transport Network) & TSSA
Nigel Bray (Railfuture Severnside)
Jenny Raggett (TFGBA)
John Hassall (Bus Users UK Severnside)
Martin Cinamond (South West Transport Network)

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Statement to the Communities, Transport & Environment Panel, Bath & North East Somerset, consideration of the arrangements for the Public Consultation on options for an east-of-Bath Park & Ride scheme, and the "Bathampton Parkway" rail-based Park & Ride scheme, referred to as "Option H" in the March 2013 report by Halcrow.

**Statement by Dorian Baker,
25 Sion Road, Bath BA1 5SH**

14th September 2015

During 2003 I began to develop the engineering design for a new railway station with a part-underground car park for up to 2800 private cars, including a link road to the Batheaston Bypass, in land between the railway to London and the railway to Trowbridge, at Bathampton Junction.

In February 2011 I produced a short paper (22 pages) describing the proposal and circulated this among a number of people in the City of Bath.

In September 2012 my group of engineering and transport consultancy was asked by B&NES to prepare a feasibility study for the "Bathampton Parkway" proposal, in accordance with railway industry standard "GRIP 2" (Guidance for Railway Investment Projects, level 2) for a proposal to construct and operate the scheme. This report was completed and submitted to the Council in February 2013, and a slightly modified final edition dated September 2013.

Our work was being carried out at the same time as a study by Halcrow that made a comparative assessment of 8 options for Park & Ride schemes intended to serve traffic approaching Bath from the east. Their report, dated March 2013, considered a Bathampton railway station-based scheme as their "Option H".

Because the two studies were being carried out for the same officer, the Group Transport Manager, I was asked by him whether I would be prepared to share information from the work carried out by my group with the Halcrow team. I agreed to do so and was told that Halcrow would get in touch. Halcrow did not contact me at all during the period September 2012 to March 2013 when our work overlapped.

The Halcrow report chapter discussing "Option H" makes a series of references to me by name. But their commentary is based only on my February 2011 discussion paper. As a result the Halcrow assessment was based on a series of flawed assumptions they had added about matters including train operations, drainage, track layout, earthworks and the business case that were very different from the findings in our February 2013 report; indeed the approach that Halcrow took to the development of a railway scheme design and operating plan was directly contrary to the requirements set out in the railway industry standard GRIP. Although my group was preparing a detailed report at the time of their study and we had been asked by our client to provide them with detailed information about the proposal, they did not make contact with us.

This means that if the choice of Options for an East-of-Bath Park & Ride scheme being published for public consultation in September 2015 is based only on the Halcrow report of March 2013, the data used as the basis for the exclusion of "Option H" was already 2 years old at that time and Halcrow had disregarded advice from the Group Transport Manager to talk to my team about the current state of development of the scheme. In short, the Halcrow March 2013 assessment of Option H disregarded the best information available to Bath & North East Somerset at that time and we therefore suggest that the exclusion of Option H from the current public consultation is not soundly based.

The final report on the Bathampton Parkway proposal dated September 2013 is available from the Group Transport Manager, Bath & North East Somerset Council.

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