

Bath & North East Somerset Council

MEETING:	Cabinet	
MEETING DATE:	10 th October 2012	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 2472
TITLE:	Better Bus Area Grant Projects	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Appendix A A431 Better Bus Fund Projects		

1 THE ISSUE

1.1 The Council, together with its West of England Partners, has been awarded £4.986m following a successful bid to the Department of Transport Better Bus Area fund to improve bus services in the sub-region. The maximum grant available for each bid was £5m.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet agrees that:

2.1 Better Bus Area Grant funding be accepted to:

- a) Upgrade bus stops on A431 Kelston Road
- b) Expand Real Time Information
- c) Promote multi-operator ticketing scheme

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The grant award in total to the West of England is for £907k revenue and £4079k capital expenditure to be spent in 2012/13 and 2013/14 across the sub-region and allocated to 2 elements in B&NES as follows:

Element	Work package	Capital 2012/13 £'000	Capital 2013/14 £'000	Revenue 2012/13 £'000	Revenue 2013/14 £'000
Element 2	A420/A431 Showcase Upgrade	108	108		
Element 4	RTI/ITS Network Management Package	212	302	50	50

3.2 The estimated £4k annual increase in revenue costs beyond March 2014 associated with extending the Real Time Passenger Information system will be met from existing revenue budgets in public transport.

4 CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

- *Building a stronger economy*

Investment in the bus network will also improve access to job opportunities and by tackling congestion, accommodate future development and boost economic growth.

5 THE REPORT

5.1 The Greater Bristol Bus Network set out to deliver a 'Showcase' level of quality of infrastructure and service across the West of England area. Showcase standard is a package of bus priorities, signal upgrades, bus stop improvements, better information and new vehicles. This project will also build on the recently approved Bath Transportation Package which will upgrade to 'Showcase' standard 10 routes in Bath.

5.2 The Better Bus Area grant will deliver further improvements to the quality and reliability of the area's bus network through:

- Expansion, management and maintenance of the Real Time Information system framework through more bus stop displays, staff resourcing to cover data download and maintenance, and rapid fault reporting and remediation.
- Stop and shelter upgrades to improve the passenger waiting environment
- Branding and marketing of services with fleet upgrades on A4 routes
- Improved safety for pedestrians and cyclists through driver training and awareness initiatives

5.3 Bus operators First, Rotala (Wessex Connect) and Abus are partners in the project and will be directly involved in the delivery, management and monitoring of the scheme package.

5.4 There are four elements to the project with Elements 2, 3 and 4 of relevance to B&NES.

Element 1 - A38 Showcase Upgrade

Element 2 – A420/A431 Showcase Upgrade along Kelston Rd (See Appendix A)

- Raised kerbs, poles and shelters
- RTI displays

Element 3 – A4 Showcase Upgrade

- New fleet of buses on X39 route

Element 4 – RTI/ITS Network Management Package

- 50 vehs fitted with RTI
- 80 vehs to be equipped with next stop displays
- 80 vehs to be equipped with Wi-Fi Promotion of multi-operator ticket scheme
- RTI system management

5.5 First is the major bus operator in the area and are providing substantial match funding to the proposal. The A4 corridor scheme will be complemented by the replacement of vehicles by First operating the high profile X39 express service between Bristol and Bath city centres. Representing a £1.7m investment, the fleet of 11 vehicles are scheduled for delivery by April 2013.

5.6 The project will be managed sub-regionally by the same governance structure as the LSTF West project.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 The report author and Lead Cabinet member have fully reviewed the risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

7.1 An EqIA has been completed. No adverse or other significant issues were found. The scheme improves access to bus services for disabled people by providing raised borders at bus stops.

8 RATIONALE

8.1 The overall package of measures will build on the Greater Bristol Bus Network by further improving the quality and reliability of bus services, raising bus patronage, reducing car dependency, and thereby tackling congestion, reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 None.

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 *Cabinet members; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer*

10.2 The consultation was carried out by email

11 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

11.1 Customer Focus; Sustainability

12 ADVICE SOUGHT

12.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer (Divisional Director – Legal and Democratic Services) and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

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Sponsoring Cabinet Member	Councillor Roger Symonds
Background papers	Better Bus Area Fund bid http://travelplus.org.uk/media/240891/better%20bus%20area%20fund%20submission%20(redacted).pdf
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	