

**GREATER BRISTOL BUS NETWORK  
QUALITY BUS PARTNERSHIP SCHEMES AND  
QUALITY BUS PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

DRAFT

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

The four unitary authorities of Bristol City Council, Bath and North East Somerset Council, North Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council, along with the Secretary of State of Transport (with regard to the Trunk Road Network in the Greater Bristol area) ["the Authorities"] and First Bristol Buses Ltd and First Avon and Somerset Ltd ["the Bus Operator"] wish to improve the quality of bus travel in Greater Bristol area, thus promoting more sustainable travel choices, social inclusion and a reduction in congestion.

The Greater Bristol area is home to around one million residents and is the main focus for shopping, cultural activities, education and tourism in the South West. During the next 20-30 years, up to 100,000 new homes and as many new jobs may be needed to sustain growth. This growth requires the delivery of significant transport infrastructure, but investment is also required to address past under-investment.

The vision of the West of England Partnership for the Greater Bristol area is one which, inter alia, strengthens the local economy, supports increasing social inclusion, improved access and links, ensuring that alternatives to the car are a realistic first choice for the majority of trips, and offers real choice.

In particular, the Authorities and the bus operator acknowledge the need to deliver a high quality public transport network in the Greater Bristol area in order to retain existing passengers and encourage modal shift from the private car. They wish to build on the schemes already successfully delivered in the Greater Bristol area, such as Showcase Bus Route 76/7 which as reported in the Joint Local Transport Plan Bus Strategy has seen a 12% increase in bus patronage, an increase in cycling of up to 13% and a reduction of 1,200 vehicle journeys per week. The Authorities and the bus operator wish to see a similar order of benefits extended to a wider area.

The Authorities and bus operator First Bristol Ltd and First Avon and Somerset Ltd have previously signed The Greater Bristol Quality Bus Network Partnership Concordat. This acknowledges the need to improve bus passenger waiting facilities and information, the quality of vehicles, and bus priority measures. It commits all the parties to working in partnership to deliver a series of high quality bus corridors.

To this end, the Authorities wish to implement the Greater Bristol Bus Network and have prepared a Major Scheme Bid (Annex E) to the Department for Transport. DfT has approved further development of this project with funding of £42 million from DfT, £7.7 million from the UAs including section 106 monies and other local contributions, and £20 million from bus operator First.

Further, each Authority and First has signed, or intends to sign, a Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnership (PIP). This creates a framework in which each party recognises that it has the ability to improve bus punctuality, and commits them to working together in support of a target for punctual operation.

The Authorities and the Bus Operator recognise that implementation of the Greater Bristol Bus Network ["the Network"] introduces an opportunity to implement measures that will further achieve the purposes and objectives of the Network.

The Authorities therefore propose to implement a Statutory Quality Bus Partnership Scheme under sections 114 to 123 of the Transport Act 2000 ["the Scheme"] for each scheme area as defined in Section 4 of this Memorandum. Infrastructure provided

on the GBBN will be provided under the terms of the Scheme, and infrastructure to be provided as part of the Scheme is described in Schedule 5 of each Scheme.

Any bus operator will be permitted to provide local bus services using this infrastructure upon making an undertaking to the Traffic Commissioner that they will adhere to the quality standards specified in the Scheme. These undertakings include matters such as vehicle accessibility, driver standards, reliability, vehicle cleanliness and maintenance and are described in Schedule 2 of the Scheme.

Further, the Authorities and the Bus Operator wish to promote behaviours and service standards which cannot be included in a statutory Quality Bus Partnership Scheme under the Transport Act 2000. They therefore propose to conclude a voluntary Bus Partnership Agreement ["the Agreement"]. This will cover the provision, maintenance and enforcement of infrastructure for each Agreement Area beyond that provided under the Scheme. It will also include a commitment to use the powers of the Traffic Management Act 2004 to minimise congestion for the benefit of local bus services.

In return, the Bus Operator will commit to provide a frequency of service at times no less than those specified in the Agreement to achieve the purposes and objectives of the Network.

## **2 DATE AND PERIOD OF OPERATION**

It is intended that both the Scheme and the Agreement will come into operation on:

- M32 corridor, 2008/9, quarter 3;
- A37 corridor, 2008/9, quarter 3;
- A367 corridor, 2009/10, quarter 1;
- A4 corridor, 2009/10, quarter 2;
- A4018 (The Mall) corridor, 2009/10, quarter 4;
- A369 corridor, 2010/11, quarter 2;
- A432 corridor, 2010/11, quarter 3;
- A370 corridor, 2010/11, quarter 3;
- A4018 (Whiteladies), 2010/11, quarter 4; and
- Bristol to North Fringe, 2010/11, quarter 4.

Each Scheme and Agreement will operate for a period of 5 years from the Commencement Date, subject to extension, or earlier termination. In the event that the Scheme for any corridor is terminated, the Agreement will also be terminated.

## **3 SCHEME AND AGREEMENT PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES**

This Agreement and each Agreement and Scheme made hereunder will assist the delivery of the Authorities' Local Transport Plan [2006-2011] and their Bus Strategy aims by:

- (a) Securing low-floor buses in each Scheme Area and will contribute towards the JLTP Bus Strategy target that over 75% of the bus fleet will be low-floor by 2010/1;
- (b) Improving punctuality in each Scheme Area and will contribute towards the JLTP Bus Strategy target that 90% of buses will be no more than 1 minute early or 5 minutes late by 2011/2;
- (c) Contributing towards the JLTP LTP target of an increase in bus patronage of 12% by 2011 through the delivery of low-floor buses, high bus operator service standards, high quality infrastructure and high levels of enforcement;
- (d) Contributing towards high levels of bus passenger satisfaction through the delivery of fast, reliable, comfortable and accessible bus services; and

(e) Contributing towards improvements in air quality by ensuring that all buses used in each Scheme Area will conform to specified emission standards.

The Authorities are satisfied that the provision of the Facilities and operation of services specified in this Agreement will:

- (a) improve the quality of local services provided in the whole or any part of each Scheme Area by bringing benefits to persons using those services; and
- (b) reduce or limit traffic congestion, noise or air pollution.

for the following reasons:

- Each Scheme will enforce high bus service standards, as specified in Schedule 1 of the Scheme;
- Each Scheme will ensure that Facilities to assist in the reliable and punctual operation of bus services will be provided as specified in Schedule 3 of the Scheme;
- Each Scheme will aim to achieve an increase in bus patronage and a mode shift from car to bus and other sustainable modes; and
- Each Scheme will achieve an improvement in air quality by applying the latest emission standards to buses used in the Scheme Area, by reducing the number of trips by car, and by reducing congestion.

#### **4 SCHEME AREAS**

The Scheme Areas to be covered are:

- M32 corridor
- A37 corridor
- A367 corridor
- A4 corridor
- A4018 (The Mall) corridor
- A369 corridor
- A432 corridor
- A370 corridor
- A4018 (Whiteladies) corridor
- Bristol to North Fringe

#### **5 VARIATION TO THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

This Memorandum of Understanding may only be varied by if such variation is agreed, in writing, between the signatories of the Authorities and the Bus Operator.

#### **6 DURATION OF THIS AGREEMENT**

This agreement will run concurrent with the Quality Bus Partnership Schemes and Agreements, and will cease to apply on termination or expiry of the final Scheme or Agreement.

#### **7 FURTHER INFORMATION**

For further information the reader is directed to:

- Statutory Quality Bus Partnership Scheme for each scheme area outlined in Section 4; and
- Voluntary Quality Bus Partnership Agreement for each scheme area outlined in Section 4.

Further information may also be obtained from:

The Independent Programme Director, Greater Bristol Bus Network