

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC



ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

BUS PARTNERSHIP FUND UPDATE

REPORT BY HEAD OF OPERATIONAL SERVICES

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to update the Panel on the progress of the Bus Partnership Project and outline the next steps and timescales for the project.

B. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Panel note the progress of the Bus Partnership Project and the timelines expected for completion.

C. SUMMARY OF IMPLICATIONS

I Council Values	Focusing on our customers' needs; being honest, open and accountable; providing equality of opportunities; making best use of our resources; working in partnership.
II Policy and Legal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment, Equality Issues, Health or Risk Assessment)	The council has a policy of supporting public transport services where resources permit. The Transport (Scotland) Act 1985 states that it is the duty of the council, in exercising their power, to conduct themselves as not to inhibit competition in the commercial market.
III Implications for Scheme of Delegations to Officers	None
IV Impact on performance and performance Indicators	The council has a target PI for Public Transport of having 90% of residents with access to an hourly or better daytime service Monday to Saturday. It is possible that changes in the commercial and subsidised network could impact this PI.
V Relevance to Single Outcome Agreement	The local bus network contributes to a number of outcomes by connecting communities with services and employment.

- VI Resources - (Financial, Staffing and Property)** The West Lothian Bus Alliance has been awarded £225,750 from Transport Scotland's Bus Partnership Fund to complete a strategic business case and outline business case appraisal.
- VII Consideration at PDSP**
- VIII Other consultations** Financial Management Unit

D. TERMS OF REPORT

D.1 Background

At its meeting on 26 October 2021, Council Executive considered a report on the Scottish Government's Bus Partnership Fund (BPF) and officers provided an update on the local application compiled by the West Lothian Bus Alliance (WLBA) for 20 local bus priority interventions across corridors in West Lothian. Council Executive ratified the application and confirmed the bid for £761,250 for completion of strategic business case and outline business case appraisal stages.

The application was successful and the West Lothian Bus Alliance was awarded £225,725 by Transport Scotland to progress a Strategic Business Case for 15 locations. An update report outlining the locations and project timeline was reported to Council Executive on 19 April 2022. A further update was reported to Council Executive on 20 December outlining the results of the completed passenger engagement exercise.

This report provides a final update on the work completed in the later stages of the business case appraisal prior to the final submission to Transport Scotland.

D.2 Strategic Business Case Overview

The Bus Partnership Fund supports local authorities to work in partnership with bus operators, to develop and deliver ambitious schemes that incorporate bus priority measures. The Fund aims to improve bus journey times and provide greater reliability for users by providing bus priority infrastructure.

The Strategic Business Case process comprises of 3 stages:

- Case for Change – reviewing evidence to ensure the partnership has identified where the problem areas are and also some initial solutions;
- Preliminary Appraisal – high level appraisal of the options, sifting out the options which are unlikely to address the problems;
- Detailed Appraisal – developing the remaining options further and modelling, if appropriate.

Additionally, the process of the Strategic Business Case allows for opportunities to gather further information and investigate the options further. This includes:

- Public engagement (survey and bus stop discussions)
- Regular meetings with operators
- Stakeholder engagement
- Data collection and analysis (from bus operators, drivers, traffic data etc)

D.3 Refinement of Options

The steps in the appraisal process result in a more detailed look at options as they progress through the process with more data gathered and consultation carried out. This results in the refinement and prioritisation of options as they progress to ensure that they are appropriate and achievable.

The initial BPF bid outlined 20 locations for consideration however funding was only provided by Transport Scotland to progress 15 out of the 20 locations. Appendix 1 provides a reminder of the initial locations submitted in the bid and those which were included in the early stages of the review.

The Case for Change stage further refined this list to 7 locations with a final 6 locations taken through the Preliminary and Detailed Appraisal as follows:

1. Alderstone Road
2. Almondvale Avenue
3. Bathgate Town Centre
4. Armadale Cross
5. Whitburn Cross
6. Broxburn and Uphall

D.4 Detailed Options Appraisal

The 6 locations above have been considered in the detailed appraisal and the following solution options have been assessed and modelled:

- Bus stop modifications and realignment;
- Junction modifications; and
- Bus priority signals.

Appendix 2 provides mapping for each location with further detail of the problems and potential solutions specific to that location.

Match in Kind (MIK) is also a stand alone option contained within the appraisal for submission to Transport Scotland. Match in Kind is the complementary support provided by partners (e.g. operators, WLC) in response to the funding provided by Transport Scotland.

The Partnership has considered the following MIK options:

- Bus stop environment improvements
- Improving the connections between land use planning and transport.
- Parking
- Active travel
- Marketing and Communication – West Lothian Council and Operator led
- Ticketing
- Customer Care improvements
- Research

D.5 Transport Planning Objectives (TPO)

As part of the STAG process aims and objectives are set. Two Transport Planning Objectives have been developed against which the options will be considered. Options will also be assessed against the STAG criteria (e.g. Environment, Climate Change, Accessibility, Safety) and the Bus Partnership Fund objectives. There are two proposed TPOs within the project:

1. TPO1 - Reduce average bus journey times from 7am to 7pm on weekdays by XX% between junction A and junction B by 2030 compared to a 2023 base.
 - Metrics: proposed to install traffic survey cameras at each location to establish journey times through the junctions and use this data to inform junction modelling. This could be replicated in future years for monitoring.
2. TPO2 - Increase bus patronage by XX% for all services between junction A and junction B by 2030 compared to a 2023 base
 - Metrics: proposed to install traffic survey cameras at each location to establish bus patronage at each location and model potential increases in bus patronage associated with journey time improvements. Traffic survey cameras (or ticket data if available at that level) to be used in future years for monitoring.

D.6 Next Steps and Timescales

The following Detailed Appraisal tasks are ongoing and will be complete by the end of April 2023:

- Update WLBA website with progress and share with Community Councils
- Finalise accessibility and patronage modelling to understand journey time benefits
- Develop indicative costs based on feasibility drawings
- Further engagement on bus priority signals

The following dates outline the committee and approval process:

- PDSP meeting 28 March 2023
- Council Executive 23 May 2023 – approval of submission
- Gateway Review with Transport Scotland to secure further funding (Date TBC)

E. CONCLUSION

The West Lothian Bus Alliance has been progressing a Strategic Business Case Appraisal of bus priority measures at key locations following the award of funding from Transport Scotland as part of the Bus Partnership Fund. The project has progressed through Case for Change, Preliminary Appraisal and is in the final Detail Appraisal stage. The final report will be considered by Council Executive on 23 May 2023 for approval before submission to Transport Scotland. This will open a Gateway Review process for consideration of future grant funding to progress to Outline Business Case and project implementation stages.

F. BACKGROUND REFERENCES

Bus Partnership Fund – Report by Head of Operational Services to Council Executive on 8 June 2021

Bus Partnership Fund Update – Report by Head of Operational Services to Council Executive on 26 October 2021

Bus Partnership Fund Update – Report by Head of Operational Services to Council Executive on 19 April 2022

Bus Partnership Fund Update – Report by Head of Operational Services to Council Executive on 20 December 2022

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Outcome of Submitted Intervention Areas

Appendix 2 - Detailed Appraisal – Mapping by Location

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28 March 2023

Appendix 1 – Outcome of Submitted Intervention Areas

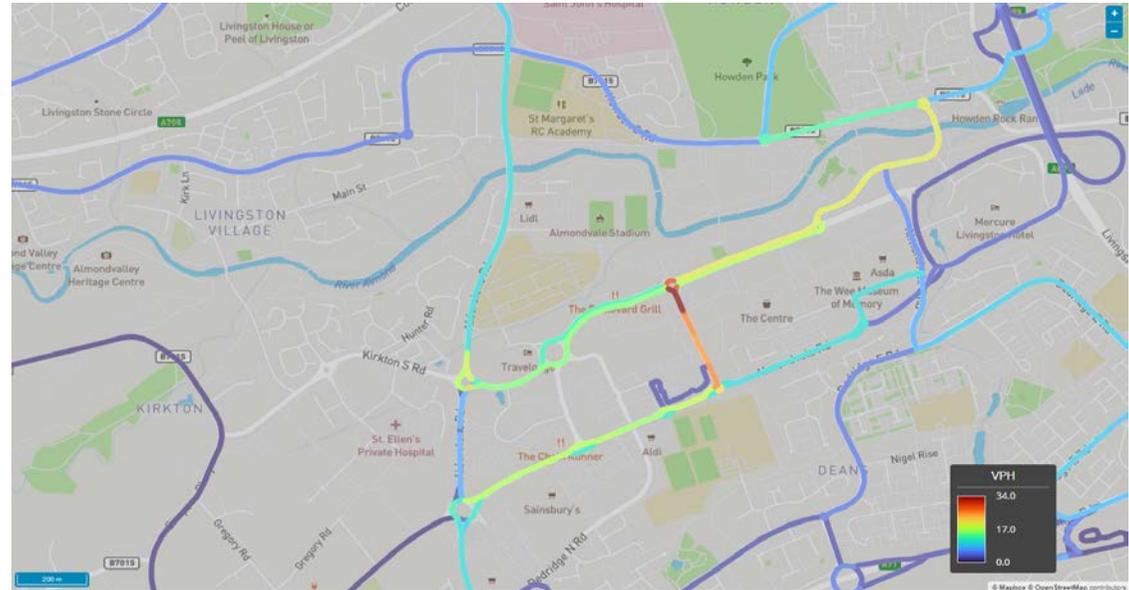
No.	Area / Corridor	Description including junctions	Issues	Application Outcome
1	Alderstone Road	Between Peel Rdbt and Almondvale, including Eliburn Rd and Kirkton N Road junctions	Delays at junctions along route	Successful
2	Almondvale	Area around Bus Terminus, including Almondvale Boulevard and Almondvale Avenue, and College Roundabout	Slow-moving traffic to College Roundabout; queuing traffic from McDonald's can impact Bubbles Roundabout.	Successful
3	Deans	Deans N Road and Knightsridge W Road, including junction of these	Slower through residential area at peak times	Successful
4	Knightsridge	Knightsridge W Road, Knightsridge E Road, and Ladywell E Road	Slower through residential area at peak times	Successful
5	Ladywell	Ladywell E Road, junctions at crossing of Couland Rd (A705) between Ladywell E Road and Howden E Road, and entrance/exit of St John's Hospital	Slower through residential area at peak times, and delays crossing Cousland Road and at Hospital	Successful
6	Craigshill	Junctions of Howden S Road and Almond Link Road, and Almond Link Road and Almond Road, and along Almond Road and Craigshill E Road	Slower through residential area at peak times, and delays through interchange at Livingston Road (A899)	Successful
7	Dedridge	Dedridge E Road	Slower through residential area at peak times	Successful
8	Civic Centre	Roundabout at junction of Howden E Road and Howden S Road, at Civic Centre entrance	Delays at junction at peak times	Successful
9	Kirkton Campus	Simpson Parkway, from Kirkton S Road junction to A705 junction	Slower westbound at peak times	Successful
10	A705	Kirkton N Road past Livingston Village to A705, and A705 toward Seafield, including Mill Rdbt and Toll Rdbt	Delays particularly Eastbound at the AM peak	Successful
11	Bathgate / Boghall	Part of A89 corridor through Bathgate, including North Bridge Street junctions, Guildiehaugh Roundabout, and Boghall Roundabout	Delays experienced due to high traffic levels and multiple conflicting vehicle movements.	Successful
12	A89 west of Bathgate	From Blackridge through Armadale to Bathgate, including Armadale Cross	Delays both directions especially in morning peak. Ties in with eastern A89 corridor in SES bid.	Successful
13	Harthill / Whitburn	B7066/B7069 between Harthill and East Whitburn, including Whitburn Crossroads	Delays in PM peak	Successful

No.	Area / Corridor	Description including junctions	Issues	Application Outcome
14	Blackburn	Blackburn town centre - W Main Street and route round Ash Grove, including E Main Street junctions with Blackburn Road and Elm Grove	Delays both directions especially in PM peak	Unsuccessful
15	A7066/B792 interchange	Easter Inch and Leyland Roundabouts	Delays at roundabouts on B792 at peak times	Successful
16	Uphall / Broxburn	Main streets through Uphall and Broxburn, including junction with Station Road (Uphall) and Greendykes Junction	Delays due to high volume of traffic, parked cars and right-turning vehicles	Successful
17	East Calder	Langton Road around junction with Redcraig Road	Delays around mini roundabout peak times	Unsuccessful
18	West Calder and Polbeth	A71, including West Calder Main Street around Kirkgate and A792 junctions, and through Polbeth	Delays, particularly in PM peak	Unsuccessful
19	Addiewell	Around Church Street / Addiebrownhill junction	Delays especially in AM peak (possibly related to nearby schools)	Unsuccessful
20	Fauldhouse / Longridge	Around Fauldhouse Main Street / Sheephousehill junction, and along B7010 towards Longridge	Delays at peak times	Unsuccessful

Appendix 2 – Detailed Appraisal – Mapping by Location

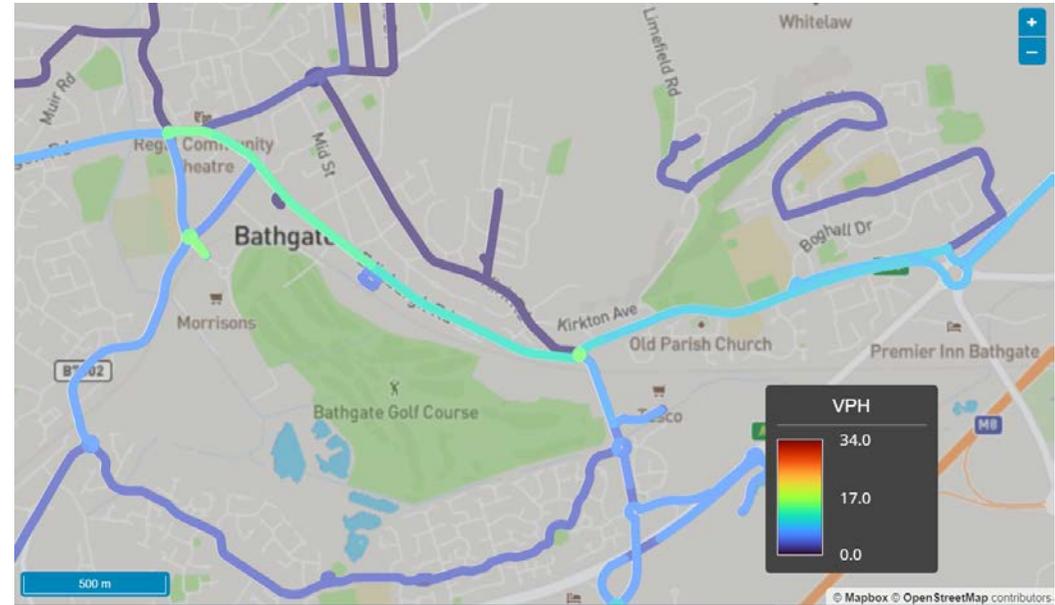
1 & 2 – Alderstone Road and Almondvale Ave

- Problems:
 - Delays are experienced on Alderstone Road including junctions with Kirkton North Road, Campus Roundabout, Almondvale Roundabout and at Bubbles Roundabout.
- Option progressed:
 - Bus priority signals at 1A
 - Junction modification at Bubbles Roundabout
 - Widening the exit onto Almondvale Avenue to provide a bus lane in the outside lane.



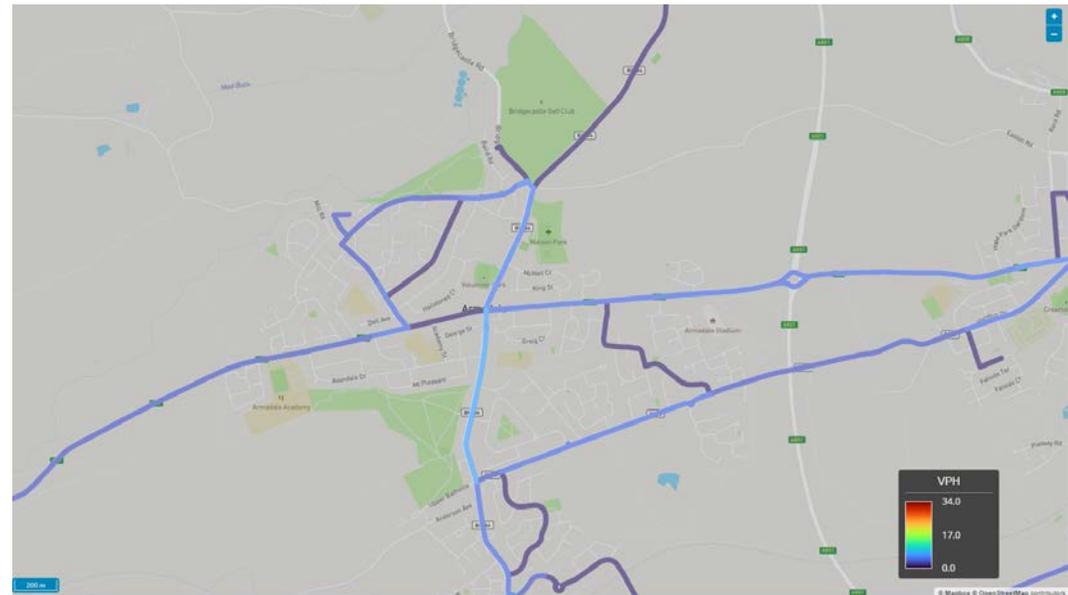
3 – Bathgate Town Centre

- **Problems**
 - Delays experienced due to high traffic levels and multiple conflicting vehicle movements. Buses waiting at the timing points on South Bridge Street can cause further delays.
- **Option progressed:**
 - South Bridge Street
 - Extend WB bus layby back to Gardners Lane. Benefit of more space for waiting buses and easier to enter the bus stop.
 - Extend EB bus layby to include two parking spaces.
 - Bus priority signals on the N Bridge Street/S Bridge Street corridor



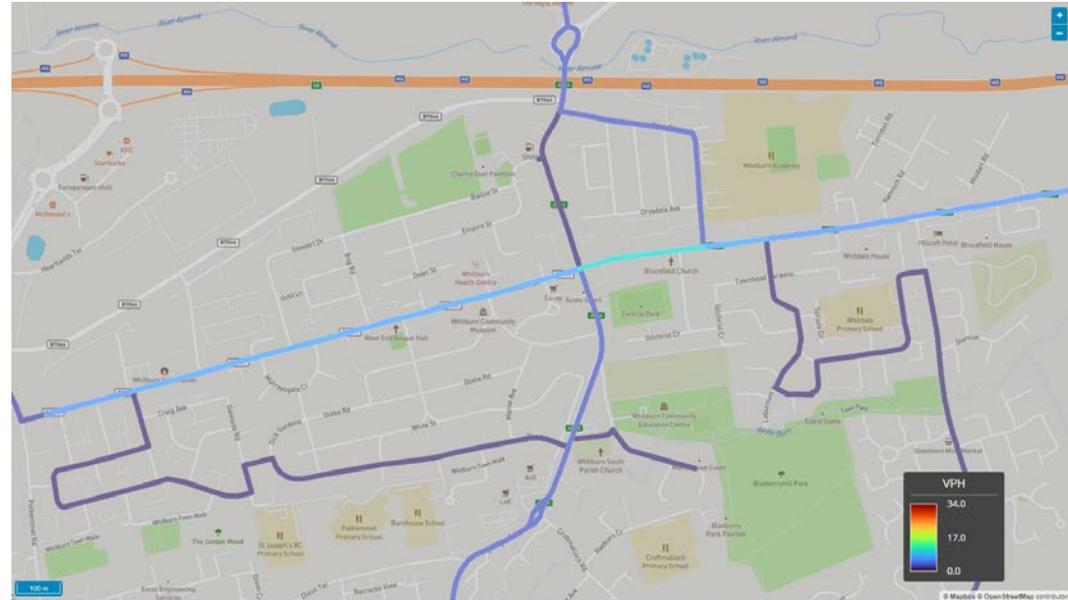
4 – Armadale Cross

- **Problems**
 - Delays are experienced at peak times between Blackridge and Bathgate via Armadale, including at Armadale Cross.
 - Inconsiderate parking
 - Pinch point in all directions at Armadale Cross
- **Options progressed:**
 - Bus priority signals at Armadale Cross
 - Review of bus stop layouts with scope to build out bus stops



5 – Whitburn Cross

- Problems
 - There are delays on the B7066/B7069 between Harthill and East Whitburn, including Whitburn Crossroads, especially in the PM peak.
- Options progressed:
 - Bus priority signals at Whitburn Cross
 - Review of bus stop layouts with scope to build out bus stops



6 – Broxburn and Uphall

- Problems
 - There are delays on the main streets through the towns, including the junction with Station Road (Uphall) and Greendykes Junction. Causes for this include high volume of traffic, parked cars and right-turning vehicles.
- Options progressed:
 - Bus priority signals along Main Street
 - Review of bus stop layouts with scope to build out bus stops
 - Realignment of bus stops

