



Transport Scotland Bus Partnership Fund – SPT Support for Bids – progress update

Committee Operations

Date of meeting 30 April 2021

Date of report 9 April 2021

Report by Chief Executive

1. Object of report

The object of this report is to:

- Inform the Committee of the submission of bids to Transport Scotland's Bus Partnership Fund (BFP) from Glasgow City Region and Ayrshire, and progress in Argyll and Bute (Helensburgh and Lomond);
- Update the Committee on SPT's involvement in the preparation of the bids; and
- Recommend the Committee approve SPT's support for the bids as submitted within the deadline of 16 April 2021.

2. Background

- 2.1 Members will recall¹ previous updates in relation to the Bus Partnership Fund, which was launched by Transport Scotland (TS) on 9 November 2020. Inviting bids by 16 April 2021, TS emphasised that bids should be partnership-focused, cover both quick wins/early deliverables and longer term (up to 5 years) proposals, and encouraged bids to be transformational and seek to address long-standing issues such as congestion and its impact on bus services.
- 2.2 Significant work has been undertaken in recent months in the preparation of bids and while at the time of writing the detail of the bids is being finalised, the following section provides a summary of the key elements of the bids. SPT has provided significant support in preparing the bids, based on current operational knowledge, strategic issues (including from the developing Regional Transport Strategy), previous studies and business cases (e.g. Fastlink), capital projects developed and delivered by SPT and constituent councils, lessons learned from recent pandemic-related Transport Transition projects (e.g. through the Bus Priority Rapid Deployment Fund).

¹ http://www.spt.co.uk/documents/latest/p111220_Agenda7.pdf and Section 3.2.2, http://www.spt.co.uk/documents/latest/sp190221_Agenda8.pdf

3. Outline of proposals

3.1 Glasgow City Region

A summary of the bid as submitted is attached at Appendix 1. The total amount bid for is circa £250-300million, with proposals based around four themes: Strategic Corridors (and potential Bus Rapid Transit); City Centre Improvements; Complementary measures; and Local Improvements. Key proposals in the bid include:

- Strategic, high frequency bus corridors – a prioritised list of 23 routes, with Paisley Road West, Maryhill Road and Dumbarton Road among the top priorities. These routes will also be considered from a cross-council boundary perspective, and will involve a range of bus priority measures to deliver improved journey times and reliability;
- Improvements to bus routing through city centre (complementary to Transport Scotland Managed Motorways programme) – a package of measures involving bus priority, lanes and gates, and also including interchanges, new “super stops” as part of bus stop rationalisation, traffic management measures, and bus route improvements;
- Regional Connectivity: Cross-boundary and orbital bus routes – including Lanarkshire Orbital, Renfrewshire Orbital, Kilbowie Road and others;
- Interchange Improvements – new and existing, including Glasgow City Centre South Bus Hub, Lanark Bus Interchange Station upgrade, Clydebank Bus Interchange, park and rides, and others; and
- Early Deliverables/Quick Wins – including stronger enforcement measures, further roll out of Real Time Passenger Information, signal improvements on cross-boundary routes.

In line with Transport Scotland’s guidance, Glasgow City Council led the development of the bid, through the Glasgow Bus Partnership (GBP). The GBP is currently a voluntary partnership with members including the main bus operators, councils, SPT, community transport, Bus Users Scotland and others. The bid was developed adopting an evidence-based and objective-led approach, in line with TS guidance and Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance (STAG).

A significant proportion of time in preparing the bid was devoted to evidence-gathering, both in terms of current issues and previous work undertaken in relation to strategic proposals for the regional bus network. A range of workshops were held with input from various stakeholders, covering themes such as fares and ticketing, customer experience, data, network (including congestion), infrastructure and others.

SPT officers provided strong support in developing the bid through GBP meetings, attendance at workshops, provision of evidence based on operational experience and network planning, projects developed for the capital programme, previous initiatives such as Fastlink and the Bus Priority Rapid Deployment Fund, and recent work undertaken in development of the new Regional Transport Strategy.

3.2 Ayrshire

A summary of the bid as submitted is attached at Appendix 2. The total amount bid for is circa £15-25 million. Proposals include:

- Bus priority measures and bus lane enforcement –on strategic routes across Ayrshire, including Kilmarnock- Irvine – Kilwinning – Three Towns (Ardrossan, Saltcoats, Stevenston);
- Strategic Park and Ride – potential locations include Dutch House and Monkton; and
- Mobility Hubs – with a focus on public transport and shared mobility options, locations include Ayr, Irvine and the Three Towns.

As with the Glasgow City Region bid, a robust development process was followed with input from operators, councils and SPT. While there is currently no formal voluntary partnership in place in Ayrshire, partners have indicated a willingness to develop such a forum after submission of the bid. SPT was heavily involved in the development of the bid and indeed funded and procured consultancy support to assist, with input based on current operational experience and previous strategic work and proposals, including those for strategic park and ride and Statutory Quality Partnerships.

3.3 Argyll and Bute (Helensburgh and Lomond)

Early discussions on a potential bid for the Helensburgh and Lomond area of Argyll and Bute were encouraging and again were facilitated by consultancy support funded by SPT. However, following more detailed consideration, it was agreed between operators, Argyll and Bute Council and SPT that further time and work was required in relation to the gathering of evidence and identification of key issues and proposals. Work will continue between partners with a view to submitting a bid to the October 2021 round of BPF, in line with previous advice from Transport Scotland.

4. Conclusions

The Bus Partnership Fund provides the most significant opportunity for large-scale infrastructure investment in the west of Scotland bus network for many years. It is hoped that, if approved, the two bids outlined above will deliver transformative change for the many people and communities who rely on bus for work, leisure and accessing services. SPT has played a key role in the development of the bids and a letter of support for the bids was provided from the SPT Chief Executive within the deadline, with a caveat regarding future approval by this Committee.

The momentum and partnership-working developed in preparation of the bids has been positive, and efforts will be made to maintain this as work progresses. Members will recall that a key criterion for success in the BPF process was that partnerships submitting a bid should be working towards the creation of a Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP), a provision of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019. The guidance and regulations for BSIPs are awaited and a consultation on these is expected later in 2021. It is, however, worth emphasising that, to date, there is a willingness across all partners and areas to develop a more formal partnership basis for future work on bus and this is highlighted in each BPF bid.

Transport Scotland has advised that successful bids will be notified in June 2021, and the focus will then turn to delivery of “quick wins”, preparation of business cases for future bid projects and, for the Argyll and Bute (Helensburgh and Lomond) area, preparation of a bid for the October 2021 BPF round. Officers will continue to update the Committee as matters progress.

5. Committee action

The Committee is recommended to:

- note the contents of this report; and
- approve SPT support for the bids outlined in section 3 above and in the appendices.

6. Consequences

Policy consequences	<i>In line with current and developing RTS.</i>
Legal consequences	<i>None at present.</i>
Financial consequences	<i>None at present.</i>
Personnel consequences	<i>None at present.</i>
Equalities consequences	<i>Assessment of the impacts on equalities groups has been undertaken in the preparation of the bids.</i>
Risk consequences	<i>None at present.</i>

Name Valerie Davidson
Title Assistant Chief Executive

Name Gordon Maclennan
Title Chief Executive

For further information, please contact *Bruce Kiloh, Head of Policy and Planning on 07891 715217 or Gordon Dickson, Head of Bus Strategy and Delivery on 07973 327479.*

Appendix 1

Transport Scotland Bus Partnership Fund

Glasgow City Region – Bid Summary

Bid Partners:

Glasgow Bus Partnership: Glasgow City Council, SPT, East Dunbartonshire Council, East Renfrewshire Council, Inverclyde Council, North Lanarkshire Council, Renfrewshire Council, South Lanarkshire Council, West Dunbartonshire Council, First Glasgow, McGill's, Stagecoach West Scotland, West Coast Motors, Community Transport Glasgow.

Proposals:

- Strategic Corridors

The bid identifies 23 strategic corridors, building on the earlier Streamline quality bus corridor concept, aiming to provide high quality, route-wide, cross-boundary interventions, including:

- Bus priority where feasible, with bus lanes operating 7am to 7pm where there is no direct frontage or need to service, and 7am to 9.30am and 4pm to 7pm where servicing is required;
- A review of parking, stopping and loading restrictions, with on street parking minimised between 7am and 7pm and identification of specific loading areas;
- Provision of inset parking/loading bays and relocation of parking/loading to side roads and other adjacent areas;
- Increased enforcement using cameras and parking attendants;
- Traffic signals upgraded to provide bus priority, with bus gates and bus pre-signals where feasible;
- A review of signalised junctions to improve efficiency by tightening layouts, minimising lost time and optimising timings and phrasings;
- Greater control of movements on/off the corridor, with side road closures, turn bans and reduced access where feasible;
- Bus stops rationalised or relocated where feasible to optimise bus stopping/starting patterns and reduce the impact on overall journey times;
- Upgraded bus stops to ensure low floor access and improved access/egress, with new shelters, Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) and a step free route into adjacent communities where feasible; and
- Mobility hubs at key interchanges.

The potential for new Bus Rapid Transit Corridors or extensions of the existing Fastlink corridor will also be explored.

- City Centre Improvements

Thirty-one city centre improvements have been included in the bid, including bus-only streets, bus lanes, traffic signal priority, creation of Super Stops and new interchanges, to facilitate improved bus journey time reliability and better cross-city connectivity. Consideration will also be given to 'punch-through' measures to ensure fast access

and egress between the city centre and the surrounding road network in a way which complements Transport Scotland's Managed Motorway proposals.

- Regional Connectivity

Forty-one targeted improvements to enhance regional connectivity are included in the bid, including bus priority at junctions and pinch-points, orbital routes, interchanges and wider measures to address localised congestion.

- Complementary Measures

Nine complementary measures are included in the bid, including enhanced enforcement of bus lanes, traffic signal improvements giving priority treatment for late running buses, and measures to improve the attractiveness of bus use and reduce boarding times, such as RTPI and infrastructure to enable the introduction of a multi-operator contactless capped payment system.

- Costs

The estimated costs of design and delivery of the bid proposals are between £256m and £289m, broken down as follows:

- Strategic corridors: £176m-£186m;
- City centre: £25m-£36m;
- Regional connectivity: £43m-£54m; and
- Complementary measures: £13m-£14m.

It is also estimated that £3m to support appraisal, business case development and monitoring will be required.

- Early Deliverables

The bid also seeks funding of circa £10.2m for early deliverables, to be completed within one year of award of funding, and includes such measures as bus priority infrastructure, junction improvements and signal upgrades.

Appendix 2

Transport Scotland Bus Partnership Fund

Ayrshire – Bid Summary

Bid Partners:

Ayrshire Roads Alliance (East Ayrshire and South Ayrshire Councils), North Ayrshire Council, SPT, Stagecoach West Scotland, McGill's Buses, Shuttle Buses, Coalfield Community Transport, South Ayrshire Community Transport.

Proposals

- 'Kilmarnock – Irvine – Kilwinning – Three Towns Corridor' Bus Priority Measures – traffic management upgrades, signal and junction improvements, bus lanes.
- *Signalised Bus Priority and Urban Placemaking, Largs – bus priority measures, integration of active travel placemaking.
- *Mobility Hub Strategy/Feasibility Study - hubs with bespoke Bus Shelter, covered bike storage, EV charging points and enhanced pedestrian waiting areas.
- Strategic Park & Ride Strategy/Feasibility Study – a series of 500-space bus park and ride facilities.
- Behavioural Change Campaign and RTPI – promotional campaign and delivery of RTPI at bus stops.
- Bus Lane Enforcement – provision of enforcement cameras.
- HGV Town Centre Strategy – new strategy for HGVs in town centres.

Early Deliverables:

Elements of the 'Kilmarnock – Irvine – Kilwinning – Three Towns Corridor' Bus Priority Measures could be delivered as "quick wins" in 2021/22, specifically traffic signal co-ordination to allow buses priority.

Costs:

- Total Estimated Cost of Proposed Options: £15 - £25 million.
- Total Estimated Cost to Develop Options (Business Case Development/Feasibility Studies): Approx. £340,000.
- Total Estimated Cost of Early Deliverables: Approx. £170,000.