

Draft Bus Strategy

November 2022

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Introduction

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area is an economically successful, innovative, and desirable place to live and work. However, our success and recent growth brings challenges, including pressure on our transport network, a need to tackle emissions locally, and contribute to the wider climate challenge response. And, in some parts of our area, people feel disconnected from the opportunities that exist in the wider region.

Public consultations show that people want to see good public transport services, as these will benefit them personally and their communities. Whilst the Covid-19 pandemic has changed travel behaviour, we know that the bus offers the opportunity to make an important contribution to the way the region functions. Local partners have acknowledged a climate change emergency and we need to reduce carbon emissions, tackle traffic congestion and improve air quality. An Independent Commission on Climate highlighted the need to reduce car miles in our region by 15% by 2030, advocating a switch to using public transport, walking, and cycling. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority has agreed this target.

Local authorities are making pledges to become carbon neutral. Promoting zero carbon transport means rethinking our transport systems and how we travel, with greater emphasis on buses, pedestrians, and cyclists. We need to transform public transport, making it more attractive, such that it provides a real alternative to the car.

Our ambition is to see Cambridgeshire and Peterborough at the forefront of excellent public transport provision. Therefore, we aim to transform bus travel – offering high levels of convenience and connectivity – not just in our urban areas, but across the entire region, including rural areas and market towns; something not seen on such a scale anywhere else in the UK. We want to deliver a fully integrated bus network, serving the needs of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough area. We want to make journeys quicker, cheaper, and more reliable, delivering attractive, environmentally friendly services across our area. To do that, we need to improve the whole journey, ensuring off-bus infrastructure and services complement the on-bus travel experience. We want to totally transform the image of bus travel, so that people feel good about using buses.

Better bus services will benefit everyone. They will provide easier access to education, training and employment opportunities, as well as the ability to reach a wider range of shopping and leisure facilities. Equally, they will provide a real alternative to using the car.

In using the bus, people will be championing a response to the climate emergency and the achievement of a fairer society.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Bus Strategy has been prepared by Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA). It sets out the ways in which we want to make bus travel more convenient, very attractive and easy to use, such that it becomes the obvious way to make a journey. This means improving every aspect of the current service, building on the strong foundations already in place, including the Busway, Cambridge Park & Ride, and demand responsive TING service.

This strategy sets out the main principles of how we will achieve our ambition and more than double bus patronage by 2030. More details of how we will deliver and fund this are

set out in our Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), reflecting our response to the National Bus Strategy: Bus Back Better, published in 2021. Our Strategy and BSIP will be regularly reviewed to reflect changing circumstances and to push continuous improvement.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority is committed to working with Government to deliver on our collective ambition, a London-style network across our geography.

Setting the Scene

Since 1986, bus operators have decided what services to run, including the routes, timetables and fares charged. Local authorities can pay operators to run other additional services that would not otherwise be provided. Currently, the Combined Authority spends **£14.4M¹** on the provision of such services across the region, of which over **90%** is levied from Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council. Local Highway Authorities are responsible for providing bus priority measures, bus stop infrastructure, Park & Ride sites, and the Busway. The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough bus network has generally declined over the period since 1986, although areas of partnership including the Cambridgeshire Busway and Cambridge Park & Ride network have delivered improvements.

The Combined Authority was established to champion sustainable economic growth across our region and the Mayor has additional powers for bus services, including the ability to assume control of the bus network, under certain conditions, through a franchising scheme (similar to the bus operation in London).

CPCA has already consulted on a new Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP). This Bus Strategy is a supporting document to the LTCP and reflects the ambition to reduce traffic and emissions and provide a much more sustainable transport network that benefits everyone.

We have already taken some positive steps to support bus services in the region. **£500K** has been invested in the Busway and Park & Ride provision. Recently, a new demand responsive service, 'TING', was launched in rural West Huntingdonshire.

We need to do much more to improve our bus network and address some key challenges that have been highlighted in local public engagement exercises over recent years:

- Bus services do not offer a practical option for many journeys because they are not available, do not go to the right places at suitable times, or are too infrequent.
- They may not be co-ordinated to connect with other services and are perceived as being unreliable and offering no advantage over the private car.
- Considered expensive by many and not value for money.
- The attractiveness of bus travel is hampered by inadequate information, difficult to understand timetables, complex fares, and variable standards of services.
- Poor reliability – 65% of bus users want to see more reliable bus services, followed by more frequent services and faster bus journey times.

¹ This equates to the total forecast spend on buses for the Combined Authority in 2022/23

- Inconvenience – 58% of non-bus users cited inconvenience as the reason for not using the bus, seeing cars as a faster and cheaper way to travel.

Market research suggests a desire to see bus service improvements, with 80% of survey respondents (bus and non-bus users) showing support². Bus users want to see greater reliability and less disruption on the road network, more frequent services connecting more places and more co-ordination, with services joining up better in terms of service timings, connections, and fares. In more rural areas, there is particular desire to see buses linking more places, more often, including evenings and Sundays³. Non-bus users support wider range of improvements, including more frequent services, quicker journey times, more services connecting places, greater integration, and good value fares.

Background to the Bus Strategy

The story so far

In 2018, the Combined Authority commissioned an extensive review of all aspects of bus service delivery, examining the current state of play, drawing on engagement with stakeholders and operators, evidence, and data. It took a close look at the different elements of the network, including city services, Park & Ride, Busway, inter-urban and rural services. It highlighted the pressures and constraints on each element and explored potential options and opportunities, including fares and ticketing, information, and bus infrastructure.

The review highlighted the underperformance of the bus network and the challenges it faced, particularly declining usage and commercial viability, poor image, unreliability, and inconsistent levels of service.

Seeing the need for a new approach, the Combined Authority agreed to use its powers under the Bus Services Act 2017 to consider different options, including the possibility of Bus Franchising. A notice of intent to undertake an assessment of Bus Franchising was published on 9 May 2019. In late 2019, extensive market research and stakeholder engagement took place to get a clear picture of what bus users and nonusers wanted from the bus network. There was a desire for improvement, which was translated into a 'Vision for Bus', adopted by the authority in May 2020. This set out a desire for a world class bus network.

Consideration of bus franchising continued during 2020-21, but it was clear that the bus market was suffering greatly from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Such uncertainty made it necessary to stall these considerations.

In response to the publication of the National Bus Strategy in 2021, the Combined Authority prepared a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and submitted this to the Department for Transport. Given the uncertainties around the local bus market and inability to pursue bus franchising at that point, the BSIP did not attract Government funding. However, in a

² CPCA survey and market research (on-line and face-to-face with 4300 responses), 2019

³ ECDC residents' survey (1400 responses), 2020, and Fenland Bus Service Report, Fenland Transport and Access Group, 2020

separate bid to the Government's ZEBRA scheme, funding was received towards the provision of 30 battery electric buses for Cambridge that will enter service in 2023.

The landscape for bus provision across the region has changed markedly over the last couple of years, giving a need to revisit the strategy for taking the bus network forward. There are significant challenges – lower patronage, cuts in commercially-viable services and increasing unreliability due to traffic and driver shortages. Meanwhile, the ambitions for what the bus network needs to achieve are growing, as set out in the National Bus Strategy and locally through the new Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and Greater Cambridge Partnership's plans to dramatically boost bus provision and in parallel cut private vehicle travel by 15%. Achieving this will see bus patronage more than double, compared to 2019 levels, with some 60-75 million passenger journeys anticipated. Whilst some of this will be met by spare capacity, the implication is that there will need to be a significant uplift in bus provision, with more buses operating overall and for longer each day.

This Bus Strategy sets the scene for the way ahead – to transform the bus network through clear and decisive actions – to benefit all.

Supporting Policy

This Bus Strategy fully reflects wider national and local policy aspirations.

Government published its **National Bus Strategy: Bus Back Better** in March 2021, setting out an ambitious vision for significant improvements to bus services to return usage to pre-COVID levels and then to build patronage further. It wants to see services that are:

- **More frequent**, with turn-up-and-go services on major routes and feeder or demand-responsive services to lower-density places.
- **Faster and more reliable**, with bus priority wherever necessary and where there is room.
- **Cheaper**, with more low, flat fares in towns and cities, lower point-to-point fares elsewhere, and more daily price capping everywhere.
- **More comprehensive**, with overprovision on a few corridors reduced to boost provision elsewhere and better services in the evenings and weekends, not necessarily with conventional buses.
- **Easier to understand**, with simpler routes, common numbering, co-ordinated timetable change dates, good publicity, and comprehensive information online.
- **Easier to use**, with common tickets, passes and daily capping across all operators, simpler fares, contactless payment, and protection of bus stations.
- **Better integrated** with other modes and each other, including more bus-rail interchange and integration and inter-bus transfers.

Locally, CPCA has developed a **Local Transport and Connectivity Plan (LTCP)**, which aims for a transport system that:

- Is accessible and efficient for everyone
- Increases the ability to access good jobs, travel to health appointments and access opportunities to improve life chances

- Is affordable to use
- Addresses pollution that adversely impacts on people’s quality of life and health

It responds directly to the Independent Commission on Climate’s findings that the region experiences transport emissions that are 50% higher than the UK average, reflecting higher levels of traffic. In response, it recommended a reduction in car miles driven by 15% by 2030, advocating a switch to public transport and active travel modes. It recognised that this would require significantly better public transport services with greater connectedness.

The Plan links to a variety of other plans and strategies, a number of which highlight the need for improved public transport. The Employment and Skills Strategy notes the need for better public transport connectivity to improve access to colleges and universities and to ensure that travel costs are more affordable for young people.

The LTCP vision is of:

“A transport network that secures a future in which the region and its people can thrive.”

This will be achieved by investing in a joined-up, net zero carbon transport system, which is high quality, reliable, convenient, affordable, safe, and accessible to everyone. Better, cleaner public transport will reduce private car use, and more cycling and walking will support both healthier lives and a greener region. Comprehensive connectivity, including digital improvements, will support a sustainable future for the region’s nationally important and innovative economy.

Excellent public transport will support the achievement of the goals and objectives of the LTCP.

Productivity *Giving both employers and people the means to achieve more of their potential, making them more efficient and innovative to create more prosperity*

Housing – support new housing and development to accommodate a growing population and workforce, and address housing affordability issues	Easier to develop areas that are built around good public transport rather than the car. Bus offers a flexible way to meet the needs of new and growing communities
Business and tourism – ensure all our region’s businesses and tourist attractions are connected sustainably to our transport hubs, ports, and airports	Buses can connect communities to key destinations for the benefit of everyone
Employment – connect all new and existing communities sustainably, so all residents can easily access a good job within 30 minutes by public transport, spreading the region’s prosperity	Buses can be routed and timed to meet the needs of employees. They are ideal for the provision of collective travel to key destinations, lessening the impact of travel peaks
Resilience – build a transport network that is resilient and adaptive to human and	Bus routes and levels of service can be varied at short notice to adapt to changing needs and demands. Dedicated priority

environmental disruption, improving journey time reliability	measures allow bus journey times to be competitive and for services to run reliably
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Connectivity – people and communities are brought closer together, giving more opportunity for work, education, leisure, and pleasure

Accessibility – promote social inclusion through the provision of a sustainable transport network that is affordable and accessible to all	Buses can provide transport for all, both those with no alternative and those who would like to choose an alternative to the car
Digital – communities are digitally connected; innovative technologies are supported and there is improved connectivity and mobility across the region	Travel by bus offers the opportunity to stay digitally connected whilst on the move and for people to do other things whilst travelling

Health – improved health and wellbeing, enabled through better connectivity, greater access to healthier journeys and lifestyles, delivering stronger, fairer, more resilient communities

Health and wellbeing – provide ‘healthy streets and high-quality public realm that puts people first and promotes active lifestyles	Buses offer a more efficient use of road space, giving streets back to communities. Public transport is central to the provision of sustainable travel options and more active lifestyles. Collective travel provides a greater sense of belonging and community
Air quality – ensure transport initiatives improve air quality standards across the region, exceeding good practice standards	Zero emission buses help to improve air quality. Use of bus reduces other traffic and its harmful impacts

Safety – to prevent all harm by reducing risk and enabling people to use the transport system with confidence

Safety – embed a safe systems approach into all planning and transport operations to achieve ‘Vision Zero’ – zero fatalities and serious injuries	Buses offer a safe form of transport, allowing stress-free travel
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Environment – protecting and improving our green spaces and improving nature with a well-planned and good quality transport network

Environment – deliver a transport network that protects and enhances our natural, historic, and built environments	More bus travel and fewer cars means that less space is needed for roads and car parks
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Climate – successfully and fairly reducing emissions to ‘net zero’ by 2050

Climate change – reduce emissions to ‘net zero’ by 2050 to minimise the impact of transport and travel on climate change	Zero emission buses contribute to the achievement of net zero. Use of bus reduces other traffic and its harmful impacts
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The Combined Authority’s Mayor sees **compassion, community, and collaboration** at the heart of what the authority does to serve the region’s population. Provision of a successful bus network is characterised by these facets. It contributes to a fairer and equal society, benefits everyone, brings people together and requires collaboration to make it work efficiently and effectively.

The LTCP sets out the clear need for a comprehensive and excellent bus network to tackle car dependency and encourage a shift away from car use to public transport use. Accessible, affordable, reliable, and frequent public transport will be a crucial part of realising the vision. New services will be needed to better connect people to education, jobs, and facilities.

Large-scale investment in bus services across the whole area will be needed. In rural areas, this will focus on providing greater connectivity and availability. In the Cambridge area, where the aim is to reduce traffic levels in the city by 10-15% on 2011 levels in order to improve journey times and reduce pollution, it will be ensuring that services are suitably attractive to current car users.

Other local strategies set out in the LTCP support making improvements to public transport, including more connectivity, increased frequencies, and greater availability.

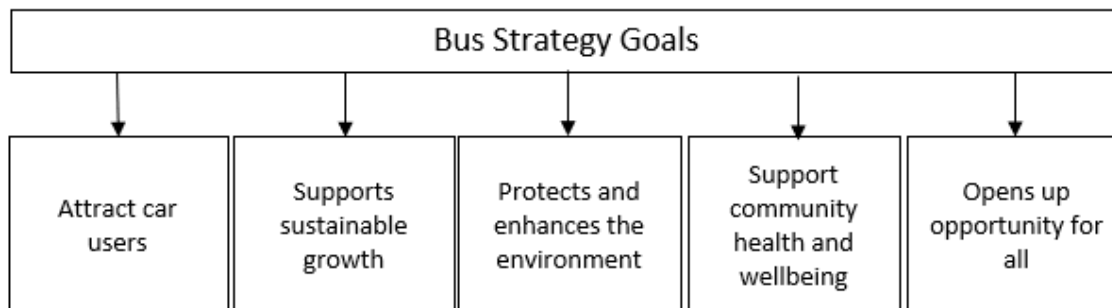
The LTCP will be developed further in the light of consultation responses and adopted in 2023.

Case Study – Excel First
Excel – First has developed an 83-mile-long service that links Peterborough and Norwich every thirty minutes via a series of important market towns across the broad plains of East Anglia. Regularly refreshed and updated, the Excel service uses high-spec double-deckers run a service that is fast, reliable, and highly regarded by passengers – it has also become a successful alternative to the Beeching-cut Peterborough – Wisbech – Kings Lynn rail service and operates via Peterborough rail station to provide onward bus-rail connections.

A Bus Strategy for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough – Vision

The vision is for a comprehensive network of bus services across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough that people find convenient, easy to use, reliable and good value for money, that is inclusive and offers a viable alternative to the car.

We want to create a more connected region, which will encourage active and sustainable travel, improve health and wellbeing, and reduce private vehicle journeys.



Success in achieving the vision will mean more travel by bus and less reliance on car travel. This in turn will help us maintain economic growth, care for the environment and improve quality of life. To realise the vision, this Strategy seeks to achieve the following:

- A comprehensive bus network, better connecting people to places across all parts of the region and beyond.
- Buses are part of a fully integrated and planned transport system.
- A more affordable network, with simplified fares and capping across the network.
- A transition to new, low emission vehicles, providing all the benefits of modern bus travel.
- A more understandable bus network, services, and fares, with clear information at all stages of a journeys and easy ticketing.
- Faster and more punctual journeys by bus, delivered with more, effective bus priority measures.
- High quality passenger waiting facilities. Good quality services with high levels of satisfaction amongst customers.
- A doubling of bus passengers (based on 2019/20 levels) by 2030. Less traffic and congestion by attracting car users to buses.
- Better bus infrastructure, including bus shelters and widespread real time information coverage.

Achieving these outcomes will rely on the delivery of a programme of evidence-based interventions across the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough geography. Bold decisions will be needed, backed by a steady, consistent and determined approach to delivering a better bus network for all. Significant capital and revenue funding sources will need to be identified from various sources to realise our ambition.

Bus Strategy – Aims

The Bus Strategy aims to set out how bus services will be improved to deliver the goals and objectives of the Combined Authority’s Local Transport and Connectivity Plan and Greater Cambridge Partnership’s transformation of the public transport network, as part of its City Access programme.

The aim of the Bus Strategy is to pave the way for a bus network that is convenient, attractive, and easy to use, characterised by the following attributes:

Convenient	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routes connecting to places and activities that people want to get to. • Services are available in all areas. • Direct routes with little deviation. • Frequent services with limited waiting time in-between. • Services are available all day and into the evening, every day. • Range of tickets to meet different needs
Attractive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The network is simple and easy to understand • Buses have a great public image, and everyone likes using them. • Services can be relied upon and run to time, without delay. • Cost of using a bus is considered good value for money, with targeted fares offers that incentivise some groups. • Buses run direct and quick. • Buses are clean, comfortable, and pleasant to ride on. • Services are well marketed and there is plenty of clear information in a range of formats, available via different media. • Waiting environments are attractive, offer seating and information, and people feel safe using them. • Pleasant and helpful drivers, able to assist when needed. • Zero emission buses, offering a quiet and smooth ride.
Easy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single understandable network that functions as one, with connecting services, branding, and system-wide ticketing. • Ability for people to transfer between bus and other travel modes (walk, cycle, e-scooter, car, coach, train). • A clear service offer, backed by a Passenger Charter. • Buses run at regular time intervals and with consistent frequencies. • Stable services with minimal changes, removing uncertainty and confusion. • Simple fares with payment through a range of methods. • A system that is accessible and can be used by all. • Plenty of information is readily available.

Delivering the Bus Strategy

Four main principles underpin our approach to delivering the bus service improvements in this Strategy:

1. Achieving a continuous cycle of passenger growth and service improvement

An injection of investment into the bus network will allow improvements, such as more frequent services or the ability to reach new destinations. Better services will attract more passengers and, therefore, increase fares revenue, improving the viability of services. Ultimately, this provides the funds for further improvements, with the planning of services aimed at meeting unmet demands.

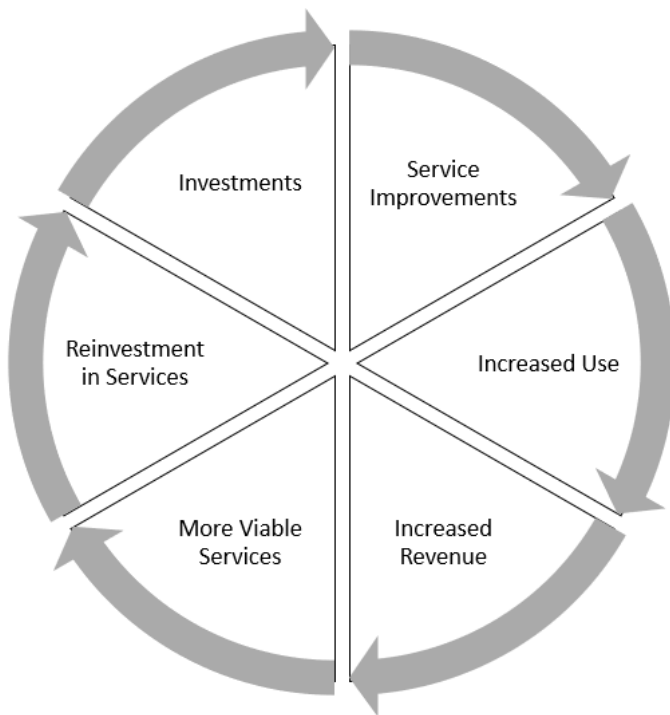


Figure 1 - Creating a virtuous circle for our bus services

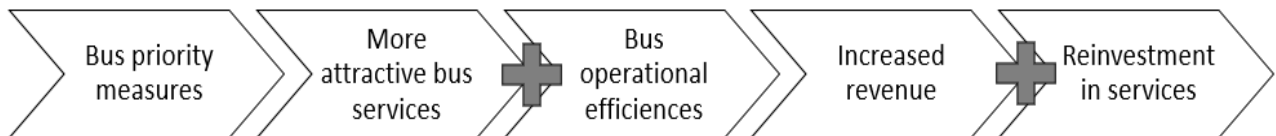


Figure 2 - Volume growth gives ability to invest and expand

Specific interventions, such as bus priority measures can help accelerate this cycle. They can speed up buses, so they offer passengers quicker journey times. Also, they reduce bus operating costs. The combination of more revenue and lower costs improves viability and provides monies for reinvestment.

2. Using the best operational model of provision to achieve the necessary step change in the most effective way

We believe that bus franchising could be the best way of delivering a modern, integrated transport system across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough with a fully accessible, low emission, bus network providing affordable, inclusive, and integrated travel opportunities. Bus services are currently provided within a deregulated environment. Commercial operators decide what routes and timetables they are going to offer and the fares they will charge. Where services do not exist or are considered deficient, the Combined Authority can seek to contract with operators and subsidise the provision of additional services.

Recognising that the fully deregulated provision of bus services does not work, the Government's National Bus Strategy required areas to introduce Enhanced Partnerships. These involve local authorities and bus operators working in partnership to jointly improve bus services. Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes set out how the bus network will be improved, including legally binding commitments by the authority to provide facilities and measures; in return, operators commit to service improvements, such as newer buses. Through such partnerships, authorities gain more influence of the network, although operators still operate within a deregulated environment.

Locally, there are concerns that the current approach does not deliver the best service for the whole Cambridgeshire and Peterborough region. Therefore, the Combined Authority is currently assessing whether introducing bus franchising would be beneficial. This would mean that the Combined Authority would specify all routes, timetables and ticketing arrangements, inviting bus operators to tender for contracts to operate those services.

Franchising itself will not deliver new or improved services, greater reliability, or lower fares. These can only be achieved through increased investment in the network. However, what franchising could offer is greater network stability and local authority control over the design and delivery of an improved network of services with a sense of a single, integrated system and identity.

There is a set process for the assessment of franchising, which has a number of stages. If franchising is considered to an appropriate way forward, it would be subject to public consultation in 2023

3. Partnership

Delivering an effective and attractive public transport service will rely on different parties working together from the private, public and voluntary sectors. Central to this will be the Bus Operator Forum, which brings together authorities, operators, and different stakeholders.

It will be important for all local authorities to work together, as each has the ability to help realise the strategy in different ways, including the management of highways and local parking policies and management.

The overall ambition is for better bus services. These may be provided by a range of different operators, both large and small. Equally, they might be run by the commercial or voluntary sectors, or even by the authority itself. Regardless of how or who runs the services, the network will be seen as a single entity, promoted, and delivered as one.

4. Integration

Whilst the Bus Strategy is all about the public bus network, it is intended that this be provided in the most effective and efficient way. The comprehensive and extensive nature of the bus network will mean that it should be able to cater for many different needs, including pupils going to school and patients attending hospital appointments. Therefore, the network will be planned to co-ordinate with those other more specialist types of transport, with the aim of achieving economies of scale and best use of all vehicle resources.

Bus Strategy – An integrated, coherent network linking people to the places they want to get to

- The foundation of the Strategy is the transformation of the bus network to offer more buses to more places. The comprehensive network will comprise:
- Services radiating out in all directions from Cambridge and Peterborough to market towns and villages. Some of these will offer more direct routes with fewer stops, making journeys faster.
- City services within Cambridge and Peterborough, including orbital routes offering direct links to peripheral employment and education sites.
- Services connecting market towns.
- Other local services in rural areas, including flexible services that run on demand with app booking, and community-based transport using minibuses and volunteer cars.

This coordinated, planned network will offer levels of connectivity across the region that have never existed before. The simplicity of the network and consistent levels of service will be important in helping everyone understand and use it. Different types of services will run at frequencies shown in the table below, with all services operating at least once an hour. The most frequent will run every 6 minutes. All services will run from early morning through to the evening and on 7 days per week. The intention is to create a network that offers a real alternative to the car.

Wherever possible, measures will be put in place to prioritise road space for buses, or provide new dedicated infrastructure for buses to use, so they can travel unhindered and quickly, ensuring punctual services that people can rely on. Not only will this give faster journeys for passengers, but it also means more efficient use of buses and drivers, allowing more services to be offered with the same resources.

Case Study – Cambridgeshire Busway

16 miles of reserved track stretch from St Ives in the north west to Addenbrookes and Trumpington south of Cambridge. With 18 new guided buses refreshing the fleet at the start of 2020, including a dozen unique three axle 100-seater double-deckers to deal with peak loadings and reduce standees, the Busway, largely running on reserved track at steady 56mph, contributes considerably to reducing congestion along the A14 corridor and around the Addenbrookes Biomedical campus. It is a BRT system that exploits all the best features of guided busways.

The successful Park & Ride that has served Cambridge well for many years, will continue. However, the more comprehensive overall bus network will mean that more people will be able to make their whole journey by bus, rather than having to drive to a Park & Ride site and change.

It is also intended to maximise use of the Busway, with very frequent services, with links from surrounding areas connecting to it.

The density of services and high frequency will make connections between routes easy to make and with minimal waiting time. This will open up travel opportunities to even more destinations, aided by the ability to use one ticket for the whole journey. Less frequent services will be timed to connect with one another at designated interchange points, where pleasant waiting facilities will be provided for passengers.

In areas of diverse and limited demand, demand responsive services will offer the flexibility to make journeys between any points within travel zones, also linking to hubs for interchange with main line bus routes.

The bus network will be integrated with local walk and cycle networks, and cycle parking provided at key bus stops and interchanges.

Bus Strategy – Bus services for rural areas

The ability to reach a range of facilities and services quickly and easily is important for people living in rural areas. This requires a more comprehensive bus network to be put in place, offering links to, from and between more places. Equally, services will be sufficiently frequent and run as directly as feasible.

Dispersed travel demands and sparse population mean that it may not always be appropriate to run conventional fixed route bus services. Therefore, other types of services, including demand responsive and community transport provision will be part of the solution. Furthermore, efficiency in the operation of services will be achieved by integrating different travel requirements, including education, social care, and health transport.

Case Study - TING

This innovative wide area demand responsive transport scheme uses four vehicles to maintain an anywhere-to-anywhere bus link in real time across 360 sq. km of west Huntingdonshire. The three conventional bus services in this area (each running 1 – 4 round trips daily) are to be merged into the Ting service by registering significant turn-up-and-go flows as part of the DRT offering to create better journey aggregation and reduce expenditure. This service directly supports our Vision for Bus, giving access for everyone to quick and easy travel. As part of its tender renewal after 12 months of trial operation, two of the vehicles to be used will be new electric minibuses.

Bus Strategy – Getting to places quickly and on time

Buses need to be able to run without hold-ups and unhindered by traffic. The overall aim of reducing other traffic on the road system, through different measures, will help buses. However, more will need to be done. Therefore, every bus route will be assessed to identify specific measures that will help buses run faster and more efficiently. Measures including bus lanes, traffic signal priority for buses and introducing restrictions on parking or loading will be considered. Furthermore, traffic restraint measures will be explored to discourage private transport use and encourage people to swap to the bus. In the Cambridge area, the possibility of road charging measures is currently being considered.

Working with constituent authorities, processes will be put in place to better manage roadworks and temporary road closures, to minimise any impact on bus services and passengers.

Working with planning authorities, steps will be taken to encourage new development on existing public transport routes and to provide infrastructure that facilitates efficient bus service provision and encourages bus use.

Bus Strategy – Value for money and simple, integrated ticketing

Whilst regular users of buses often consider bus fares to represent reasonable value for money, particularly where attractive day or season tickets exist, non-users perceive bus travel to be costly. Clearly, cost and ticketing can be a barrier to using the bus. Therefore, simple fares and ticketing system play a crucial part in making bus use attractive.

Just one ticket range will be made available, allowing travel on any bus, providing ease of use and flexibility. Tickets will include single, day, week, month, and year, along with bundles, such as 10 tickets for use over a 1-month period. One fare will apply for a journey, even when a change of bus is involved.

Payment will be available on-bus (cash or contactless) or via app, with payment automatically capped to offer the best ticket deal, providing the cheapest travel option.

Recognising that young people up to 25 years are dependent on buses, but equally have low incomes, they will be offered discounted fares to bridge the transition from child to adult fares.

Bus Strategy – Information and getting the message out

The comprehensive network of bus services will be promoted as a single, joined up system. There will be a one source of information about all routes, times and tickets, regardless of different operators running services. A simple identifiable brand will be used across the region's bus network and on all information. Simplicity of the information will be aided by the easily understood network and regular timetables. Clear, comprehensive information will be provided online, via app, in printed form and at bus stops, including real time displays indicating when the next bus is due. There will be strong marketing campaigns encouraging bus use via a range of media, including targeted communications aimed at particular groups of potential users.

Information will be available before and during travel, in a range of formats, helping people to plan their journeys and be informed about other details on the way. On-bus audio-visual displays will provide information on journey progress, next stops, delays and other information, such as connections with other services at points ahead.

Bus Strategy – Delighting customers

Travel by bus will be pleasant and comfortable. Passengers will feel safe at all stages of their journeys.

Buses will offer design features that delight customers, including the ability to move around the bus, sit in comfort and have a clear view out of the windows. USB charging will be available at all seats. All buses will be equipped with on-bus CCTV.

Drivers will be trained in smooth driving and customer care.

The desire is for bus stops and the walking routes to them to be well maintained and lit. Where feasible, CCTV will be provided. Bus stops will, wherever possible, have shelters, along with seating and information displays. Stops will be kept clear of other vehicles, allowing buses to pull up right at the kerb, enabling easy access on to and off buses. Bus stations and interchanges will be enlarged to accommodate more buses and will offer safe and pleasant waiting environments for customers.

Surveys will be undertaken regularly to measure customer satisfaction with different aspects of the bus network, identifying potential areas for improvement.

Bus Strategy – Buses that people want to get on

Buses make efficient use of road space. A bus can carry the same number of people as up to 70 cars. Modern diesel engines mean much lower emissions and introduction of zero emission electric buses will make for a very clean, smooth, and quiet way of travelling.

The aim is for a new, modern fleet of zero emission buses to run services across the region. These will also provide a high standard of comfort for customers, in terms of décor, lighting, temperature and seating.

New bus depots will be established to provide suitable electric charging facilities for the fleet, as well as excellent vehicle maintenance and cleaning facilities and staff accommodation.

Case Study – Electric Buses
The first two electric double-deckers arrived in December 2019 for trial running whilst our successful ZEBRA bid was compiled. The successful bid is now being actioned and will replace all the Park & Ride buses with thirty zero emission double-deckers in Spring 2023. These will dramatically cut NOx and particulates in Cambridge City Centre. By operating many short journeys in the core, they will maximise the benefits of the vehicles in our Air Quality Management Zone.