

North Somerset Council Decision



DECISION OF: COUNCILLOR HUGH MALYAN. CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORT

WITH ADVICE FROM: DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT, ASSETS AND TRANSPORT SERVICES.

Decision No: 25/26 EAT 338

Subject: Confirmation of the remaining Bus Service Improvement Plan capital programme schemes

Key Decision: NO

Decision:

- To approve the progression of the remaining and previously unapproved Bus Service Improvement Plan and Bus Grant funding capital improvement schemes.

Reason:

The Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) capital programme has reached a mature stage of development with several schemes completed, several more with delivery in-progress, and several more in late stages of design and preparation.

Since the programme began in 2023, there has been significant change from the original list of schemes, with several removed from the programme, and several added.

Additional funding from the Local Authority Bus Grant (LABG) has also been added to the capital programme, enabling the progression of additional schemes.

The BSIP and LABG schemes cover a range of measures intended to support local bus services. In October 2025, the Department for Transport approved a Project Adjustment Request (PAR) that sought various changes to scopes, budgets and programmes for the remaining schemes.

This decision is required to approve the delivery of the remaining capital projects for both BSIP and LABG, where not covered by existing cabinet member decisions.

Background - programme development and purpose:

The Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) is a joint initiative between North Somerset Council (NSC), the West of England Combined Authority (WECA), the Department for Transport (DfT) and bus operators.

Our communities tell us they want more reliable, frequent and affordable bus services. That's what we're working hard to deliver through our infrastructure schemes – improving

junctions to offer better flow for all traffic, resulting in quicker, more reliable, bus services, that get people where they need to be more efficiently.

We want North Somerset communities to have a modern, efficient, reliable, and affordable public transport system they can enjoy for years to come. The BSIP is working to achieve this goal by delivering packages of joined-up improvements, from more frequent bus services to more affordable fares, which work alongside our new bus service and sustainable travel infrastructure schemes, to benefit residents and communities. Together, these changes will help make bus travel the first public transport choice, and more financially sustainable longer-term, helping to protect our vital services for the future. Current UK Government funding for improving bus services through the Bus Service Improvement Plan is available only for a short time. But its long-term legacy will be more reliable, efficient and frequent bus services, new electric buses which are better for the environment, and more financially secure bus services, fit for our growing population, now and in the future.

Our infrastructure schemes are designed to enhance and protect residents' bus services, and promote more sustainable travel for years to come, by:

- Introducing bus priority measures including dedicated bus lanes, intelligent traffic signals to give bus users priority in key areas/at peak times, as well as addressing congestion hotspots and pinch points.
- incorporating better crossings and pavements for pedestrians, cyclists and others using lower-carbon forms of transport. This will improve the travel experience, encouraging more people to walk, wheel and cycle wherever possible, and making it easier to get to bus stops in some locations
- creating attractive new transport hubs in communities, offering a range of facilities such as secure cycle parking, real-time information displays and electric charging points, and bringing a place-making boost to town and village centres
- and replacing or improving existing stops and shelters on priority routes – making the experience of waiting for, and making, travel connections better for residents.

These changes help make bus services quicker, more reliable, and more affordable for residents – and more financially viable for bus operators to keep running, requiring lower or no public subsidy.

The BSIP capital programme covers a range of initiatives being put in place under the UK Government-funded Bus Service Improvement Plan: www.n-somerset.gov.uk/bsip.

More recently, funding from the Local Authority Bus Grant (LABG) has been added to the capital programme. This funding will be used to help manage delivery pressures within the BSIP programme, and to expand the programme of bus stop improvements.

In October 2025, the Department for Transport approved a Project Adjustment Request (PAR) that sought various changes to scopes, budgets and programmes for the remaining schemes.

Several of the larger BSIP and LABG funded schemes have required individual Cabinet Member decisions. Several schemes have either been completed or are in a late stage of delivery. The programme agreed with DfT dictates that all affected schemes will be completed by end of January 2027.

All affected schemes have been previously discussed at Programme Board, CATE scrutiny meetings, and have been approved informally through discussion with the Cabinet Member for Highways. This decision is to ensure that the remaining programme has had political oversight and authority to proceed.

Background – Governance:

Delegations

- The detailed works programme (including scheme types, outcomes, budget, team responsible, links and dependencies etc.) will therefore be approved by the Cabinet Member for Highways, supported by technical advice from the Head of Transport and the Head of Infrastructure (BSIP).

Programme Oversight & Corporate Governance

- The BSIP Project and Programme Boards will continue to monitor delivery progress, risks, budget pressures and any in-year adjustments across the combined programme.
- The Capital Board (CPPDB) will receive the combined programme for information, ensuring corporate visibility and alignment with the Council's wider capital strategy.
- Procurement decisions will be made in accordance with Contract Standing Orders.

Political Oversight & Member Communications

- The Cabinet Member for Highways will receive regular updates on programme delivery, key risks and any forthcoming decisions.
- Any significant change (see below definition) requiring Member approval will be captured via a Cabinet Member Decision.
- Ward councillors, town and parish councils and stakeholders will continue to receive live updates through the Highways Dashboard, showing scheme status, delivery timelines and upcoming planned works.

Escalation of Significant Changes

- Any significant change in scope or budget beyond agreed tolerance will be escalated to the Cabinet Member for Highways for formal reconsideration and decision

Proposed Definition of Significant Change

A change is considered *significant* if it meets any of these criteria:

1. Budget Variance:
A change of greater than £250,000 *or* greater than 20% of the approved budget for an individual scheme, whichever is lower.
We also undertake change control processes with the DfT as the programme assurance body.
2. Scope Change:
A material alteration to the purpose, nature or outcomes of a scheme (e.g., removing a major element, fundamentally changing the treatment type, or altering a project from active travel to capacity enhancement).
3. New Funding Requirement:
Introduction of an unbudgeted cost requiring additional Council capital or revenue funding.

4. Reputational or Policy Impact:
Any change likely to generate material political or community impact, or which deviates from adopted policy frameworks.

Examples of *non-significant* changes (for clarity):

- Adjusting delivery phasing within the same financial year.
- Minor design changes that do not materially affect cost or outcomes.
- Re-profiling budgets between schemes where this remains within the overall approved envelope and prioritisation.

Decision:

- To approve the delivery of the remaining Bus Service Improvement Plan and Local Authority Bus Grant schemes, as listed in the appendix to this decision paper.

Reasons:

The schemes are required to improve bus journey times and service reliability, to improve the passenger experience through improving waiting facilities and links to local bus services.

Collectively, the schemes will help to ensure the commercial sustainability of local bus services.

Options Considered:

None – the affected schemes are at a late stage of development.

Financial Implications:

Costs:

The costs of the schemes listed in the appendix to this decision paper are projected to be within the available budgets listed in the appendix.

There are no changes to the capital programme as a result of this Decision as budgets were vired to reflect the latest Project Adjustment Request within the October 2025 Cabinet Decision (CAB38 Budget Monitor 2025/26 Month 5).

The programme includes allowances for inflation and contingency, recognising the risks associated with market volatility, utilities coordination, and construction cost pressures. These will be managed through the Highways Capital Board governance arrangements, with any material adjustments reported through the agreed escalation and decision route.

In addition, delivery will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders and established procurement routes, including the Highways Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) and the Council's existing highways framework contracts, ensuring compliant, efficient mobilisation of works and value for money. Contract awards will be approved through the defined governance arrangements.

Funding:

In May 2022 the Department for Transport (DfT) awarded North Somerset Council (NSC) an indicative £47.8 million in capital funding to spend wholly on bus infrastructure schemes within North Somerset. In 2025, DfT announced Local Authority Bus Grant capital funding for NSC totalling £1.687 million.

The available budgets which are included in cost centres KDT150 and KDT151 are listed against the scheme names in the appendix to this decision.

Legal Powers and Implications:

The Highways Act 1980 provides the council with the necessary powers to make changes to the public highway.

The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 provides the council with the necessary powers to implement bus lanes and other traffic restrictions on the public highway.

Climate Change and Environmental Implications:

The wider BSIP programme, including the infrastructure scheme discussed in this report, will contribute to enhancing the reliability and attractiveness of the public transport network, with the aim of enabling more people to choose bus travel, thereby reducing the number of car journeys that need to be taken within North Somerset and beyond.

In line with the commitments made in the adopted Joint Local Transport Plan 4, the BSIP has ambitious targets to:

- reduce bus journey times by 2 per cent by 2025 and by 10 per cent by 2030
- achieve 95 per cent of services running on time, defined as being no more than one minute early or five minutes late, by 2030
- return to pre-pandemic patronage levels by 2025 and grow patronage by at least 24 per cent from that level by 2030
- increase passenger satisfaction to 89 per cent for 2025 and 95 per cent for 2030
- aim for all buses to be zero emission by 2030.

The proposed scheme for in Long Ashton will contribute towards achieving these targets, supporting a sustainable bus network, and encouraging modal shift from private cars to public transport, which will contribute towards the council's climate change and environmental objectives.

Consultation:

The BSIP and LABG programme has been reviewed by the CATE Scrutiny Committee on several occasions, most recently on 6 November 2025.

Individual schemes are subject to consultation with local communities, both informally and where statutory processes are required.

Risk Management:

There is effective project and programme management led by officers with support by an external consultancy to aid in both design and contract management. There is an agreed internal governance function to oversee decision making which includes regular reporting through appropriate boards and as laid out above.

Equality Implications:

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment: Yes.

The assessment shows there are positive or neutral outcomes for the works programme for all users, albeit with low or negligible levels of impact across the various groups. Mostly the programme of works will aid disabled people, people on low incomes, and younger and older age groups, by helping to improve public transport viability.

Corporate Implications:

The North Somerset Council Corporate Plan 2024-28 includes key commitments to:

- deliver the Climate Emergency Strategy and action plan and progress towards net zero by 2030
- deliver large-scale projects that improve the infrastructure and sustainability of North Somerset
- continue to invest in our highways and transport network to connect places and communities
- deliver on public transport improvements and support more cycling and walking across

North Somerset to help decarbonise travel and promote preventative public health and encourage healthy lifestyles.

This includes 'offering transport choices that make the most of our infrastructure and provide opportunities for better use of public transport'.

Regionally, the council is a member authority of the Western Gateway Sub-national Transport Body (STB) and has recently adopted our Strategic Transport Plan 2024-2050. This firmly sets out the wider region's commitment to act on the essential decarbonisation of our transport networks with one of the five overarching principles being 'Decarbonisation and Air Quality' and sets the target to achieve a shift of 17% of current vehicle kilometres to sustainable modes.

Sub-regionally, as part of the West of England region, the Council's overarching transport strategy is the Joint Local Transport Plan 4 (JLTP4), that clearly states the direction of travel for decarbonising our transport network. This includes:

- that 'to transform our region, we will need to be flexible, agile and brave in our approach to the climate emergency'
- 'taking action against climate change and address poor air quality', as one of the five key objectives
- recognising the need to 'provide transformational alternatives' to car driving

- 'considering ways to manage demand possibly through congestion charging, emissions charging and workplace parking levy-type schemes', as a sub-region.

More specifically for public transport, the plan commits to:

- reinventing public transport through mass transit, smart ticketing and making it more user friendly, convenient, safe, direct and attractive linking key destinations to enable everyone to use it
- rethinking how we use our existing transport corridors including reallocating more road space to buses, pedestrians and cyclists
- demand management measures to influence travel choice and raise revenue to reinvest in alternatives
- first and last mile-type solutions to provide a linked-up transport network.

The emerging North Somerset Local Plan continues the strong vision-led 'decide and provide' approach to transport decarbonisation through its sustainable transport strategy, by proposing development in locations where sites will be required to reduce the need to travel and reduce car dependency - by being located close to existing facilities and connecting into existing and improved sustainable transport networks – providing more options to get around.

Appendices:

List of proposed schemes.

Background Papers:

Report to The Executive – 20th October 2021 - Update on the Development of a Joint Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) with the West of England Combined Authority and Bus Operators

Report to The Executive – 22nd June 2022 – North Somerset Bus Service Improvement Plan

Executive Committee – 18th October 2023 - Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) - Contract Award of Design and Build Contractor

Long Ashton Proposals [NSC BSIP Governance Meeting](#)

Signatories:

Decision Maker(s):

Signed:  Cabinet Member Highways and Transport

Date: 6 March 2026

With Advice From:

Signed:  Director Environment, Assets and Transport Services

Date: 6 March 2026

Appendix 1: list of schemes requiring approvals

Code	Project	Scheme name	Ward	Parish	Funding	Budget
KDT150	BSIP038	Bus Lane Review	Multiple	Multiple	BSIP	£ 50,000
KDT150	BSIP005	Traffic Signals (A38 corridor)	Multiple	Multiple	BSIP	£ 23,490
KDT150	BSIP013	Traffic Signals (A370 corridor)	Multiple	Multiple	BSIP	£ 280,034
KDT150	BSIP019	Traffic Signals (A369 corridor)	Multiple	Multiple	BSIP	£ 35,235
KDT150	BSIP028	Traffic Signals (WsM junctions)	Multiple	WsM	BSIP	£ 176,409
KDT150	BSIP024	Traffic Signals (Clevedon junctions)	Multiple	Clevedon	BSIP	£ 84,832
KDT150	BSIP032	Arboricultural works	Multiple	Multiple	BSIP	£ 25,000
KDT150	BSIP036	Parking Restrictions	Multiple	Multiple	BSIP	£ 100,000
KDT151	BSIP052	Bus Shelters and stops - new assets	Multiple	Multiple	LABG	£ 300,000
KDT151	BSIP053	Bus Shelters and stops - upgrades	Multiple	Multiple	LABG	£ 200,000
KDT151	BSIP020	Portishead Interchange	Portishead North	Portishead	LABG	£ 1,032,000
KDT151	BSIP025	Clevedon Interchange	Clevedon East	Clevedon	BSIP	£ 982,000
KDT151	BSIP029	Worle Interchange	WsM North Worle	WsM	BSIP	£ 1,432,000
KDT151	BSIP030	Nailsea Interchange	Nailsea Yeo	Nailsea	BSIP	£ 682,000
KDT151	BSIP034	Bus Stop Programme	Multiple	Multiple	BSIP	£ 5,285,000
KDT151	BSIP041	F&L mile - ped/cycle	Multiple	Multiple	BSIP	£ 100,000
KDT151	BSIP043	Hub - Backwell	Backwell	Backwell	BSIP	£ 115,000
KDT151	BSIP044	Hub - Cleeve	Wroughton	Cleeve	BSIP	£ 350,000
KDT151	BSIP045	Hub - Congresbury	Congresbury & Puxton	Congresbury	BSIP	£ 115,000
KDT151	BSIP050	Hub - Yatton	Yatton	Yatton	BSIP	£ 115,000