

Essex County Council Bus Service Improvement Delivery Plan 2025-26

Name of scheme/measure	Additional description of scheme/measure (including intended beneficial outcomes)	Target delivery date	Budget/estimated cost		
			Capital	Revenue	Total
Sustaining 14 Local Bus Services until 2026	Funding used to subsidise 14 services commercially withdrawn by bus operators over Covid period with aim of allowing them to recover passengers to return to commercial viability. This will allow passengers to continue to make journeys and retain connectivity.	Jul-25		420,000	420,000
DigiGo continuation and extension	Extension of current Digi-Go Digital DRT service operations to 2026. This aligns DigiGo with other new services supported under the Local Bus Strategy 2024 to 2028 and allows the service to continue to operate in a rural area.	Apr-25		505,044	505,044
Moovit	Extension of DigiGo Booking, planning and reporting system to enable DigiGo operations	Apr-25		125,000	125,000
Stripe	Extension of digital payment mechanism for customers of Digi-Go	Apr-25		18,000	18,000

Tendring Enhanced Partnership Network Improvements	Service Support measures to a) increase frequency and/or service times and days of operation, b) Contract for additional services to improve bus network in selected areas, c) Marketing publicity and information to support bus services changes (both digital and hard copy). This will provide additional services and connectivity in one of Essex's most rural and most deprived districts.	Nov-25		2,899,965	2,899,965
Harlow Enhanced Partnership Network Improvements	Extending the times and days of operation and frequency of bus services in Harlow (including addressing issues caused by recent commercial service alterations) as part of our work toward a Harlow EP	Nov-25		300,000	300,000
Thrive	Locally based pilot projects to develop a better understanding of what measures are best at growing bus services. Measures include marketing, digital marketing, increasing frequency, fares and better information.	Jun-25		2,749,281	2,749,281

TravelEssex Integrated Services: multi-modal journey planning and demand responsive service functionality to enable a variety of transport operators and services to offer integrated multi-modal and multi-operator journey planning, booking, ticketing and service information (Modernising passenger transport)	This project will allow the development and delivery of an all Essex (and regional) multi-operator, multi-modal transport journey platform to provide significantly enhanced connectivity by enabling journeys to be planned, booked, paid for and tracked across a wide range of services including the commercial bus network, supported bus services, community transport services, home to school services, hospital transport and adult social care services.	Jun-25		1,872,000	1,872,000
Love Your Bus	Ultra - local competition to allow parish and town councils to bid for support improvements to their existing local bus services to drive growth, with reciprocal commitment to support them locally through marketing, advertising and information	Apr-25		750,000	750,000
Bus priority revenue works	Revenue works on small scale projects e.g. lines and signs to improve bus priority along key sections of bus routes. Providing improved journey time and reliability.	Mar-26		100,000	100,000

Survey of every bus stop	A detailed physical infrastructure survey of every bus stop in Essex including recording its state to allow for more effective maintenance planning	Apr-25		140,000	140,000
Transformative Enhanced Partnership Network Improvements	A transformative programme of bus service improvement and provision. To include enhancements to services as well as wholly new services. Integrating grant funding with developer (s106) funding to provide further significant enhancements. Develop services that become financially sustainable before s106 and grant funding expires.	Mar-27		2,861,607	2,861,607
Capability Building for the Voluntary Network and DRT service provision	Addressing gaps in the market by providing high quality and low cost training for minibuss drivers required for the operation of Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services and community led bus schemes. To include MIDAS training and other core training elements.	Mar-27		150,000	150,000
Local Bus Network Community Engagement	Engagement with our local communities, Parish and Town councils to support collaborative measures to grow the bus network.	Oct-25		50,000	50,000
Improved data analysis and network planning	Enhanced data analysis to provide better network planning and service provision options.	Oct-25		200,000	200,000

Improved ticketing and fares	Investment in a pilot to test ticketing and fare initiatives and outcomes initially for care leavers. This project will also support promotion of the English National Concessionary Travel (ENCTS bus pass) Scheme.	Mar-26		750,000	750,000
Chelmsford Park and Ride services	Maintaining service levels at Chelmsford Park and Ride to support a clear patronage growth trajectory and the significant housing development. This will include mitigating the congestion impacts of significant highways infrastructure investment.	Mar-26		600,000	600,000
Year 6 Travel Training Pilot	Training for year 6 children before they leave primary school and transition to secondary school. Providing more opportunity for children to travel to school by bus rather than car. Supporting the local bus service; as well as reducing congestion and improving health and wellbeing. This would be school specific training for that particular journey not general awareness. Outcomes would be tracked.	Mar-27		100,000	100,000

Expanding closed school services to the serve the community.	Currently some home to school transport services that transport children to mainstream secondary schools operate as a 'closed' service in effect meaning that they are available to a limited group within a community. The way in which they are provided e.g. a single journey in and single journey out; means they are not attractive to other potential passengers. This review will consider whether changes could be made to expand the offer so that the service becomes more attractive and valuable to the wider community.	Mar-27		100,000	100,000
Improved Safety and Accessibility	Safety when traveling using the bus and train network is an issue which is raised consistently in passenger satisfaction surveys. Collaborative working with other services such as police and fire services, wider community groups, groups focused on the safety of women, girls, vulnerable and minority groups will potentially address key safety issues and address wider anti-social behaviour.	Mar-27		300,000	300,000
Smart timetables at bus stops	A pilot for digital timetables at bus stops which can be updated remotely, ensuring information is current and can also can provide additional information.	Sep-26		200,000	200,000

Accelerated Bus Shelters Transformation Programme	Increased provision of 180 - 200 new bus shelters under the Bus Shelter Transformation Programme.	Mar-27	3,000,000		3,000,000
Bus Stop Improvements	Good value bus stop improvements with local support.	Mar-27	600,000		600,000

Park and Ride – site service improvements and solar canopy business case	On site service improvements to the Park and Ride services; and assessment of the opportunity for installing solar canopies over the sites.	Apr-26	300,000		300,000
Enhanced Partnership Network Improvement Capital Investment Programme	A capital investment programme centred on medium and larger scale schemes designed to deliver higher bus speeds. To include, well placed bus lanes, improvements to bus station and transport hub capacity, road layout realignments and parking restrictions at key locations This programme will leverage bus operator commitments to our Enhanced Partnership schemes, such as fleet investment, service enhancements and ticketing improvements.	Mar-27	3,029,682		3,029,682
Essex Zebra	Bus operators are keen to begin piloting electric vehicles and infrastructure to start to understand their long term investment strategies in wholesale transition. This will be particularly important for rural services and interurban services where aligning longer journeys and charging intervals will be critical. We are proposing to run a competitive process to identify the best zero emission pilot projects – including hydrogen alongside electric.	Nov-26	750,000		750,000

Realtime Passenger Information Strategy	Annual customer surveys confirm that accurate information on bus arrival times is a key driver of passenger satisfaction. This new investment strategy for RTPI displays will be based on a set of strategic criteria targeting stop usage and passenger and community feedback.	Mar-27	1,500,000		1,500,000
Local Authority BSOG - support for local bus services	Support for 150 supported local bus services	Apr-25		1,185,991	

Capacity and Capability Grant	Support in programme management to ensure the full delivery of the programme to time and budget; network delivery support to ensure that there is capacity to commission new services in an integrated way which maximises sustainability	Jan-26		125,000	
			9,179,682	15,190,897	24,370,579