

Information

for County Councillors

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From:	Natasha Bates, Service Manager – Commissioning, Passenger Transport
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Relevant SLT Director and sign-off date:	Paula Hewitt – Lead Director for Economic and Community Infrastructure & Director of Commissioning 06.04.22
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Date:	08.04.2022
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To:	All County Councillors
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Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) Funding Announcement

Following submission of Somerset's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) in October 2021, the DfT have announced indicative funding of up to £11,855,859 for Somerset (of which £8.1m is capital and £3.7m is revenue).

The BSIP funding process has been hugely competitive. Many authorities have received no funding at all (only 31 of the 79 bids received funding), with only a handful being chosen for large 'transformational' levels of funding. It is therefore great news that Somerset's plan has been seen by the Government as having the level of ambition and quality to receive a funding award. Whilst it is disappointing that the amount of funding is lower than the original £165m bid submitted, it is really good to see Somerset being recognised in this process and this puts us in a good place to seek further funding in due course.

The funding has a number of restrictions and key priority areas that the DfT wish Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) to focus on, which include bus priority for capital funding and reduced/ simplified fares and increased frequencies/new services for revenue funding.

The funding cannot be used for schemes that don't primarily benefit buses, generic marketing or advertising, provision of on bus hardware and investment in existing infrastructure.

The next stage in the process is to submit a summary table to the DfT by **2nd May 2022** setting out our intentions for using the funding allocation, prioritised interventions, delivery timelines, costs and how it will be reflected in the Enhanced Partnership (EP) Plan and Scheme. The DfT recognise that a number of Local Authorities will have elections and therefore formal or political approval is not possible at this stage. An updated table incorporating any feedback, together with the varied EP will then need to be submitted by the **end of June 2022**.

The DfT will review the EP before confirming funding and either agree it meets their expectations and award the funding or provide further feedback and an opportunity to strengthen the EP before they amend or withdraw funding.

If, and when funding is confirmed – EPs need to be made or varied.

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