

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT, WASTE, STREET SCENE AND FLOODING** **Cllr Dr Mark McClelland**

### **HIGHWAYS AND WASTE**

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**REFERENCE: HTW-21-21**

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## **NATIONAL BUS STRATEGY (NBS)**

### **Purpose of Report**

To allow Wiltshire Council to notify its intent to the Department for Transport, to establish an Enhanced Partnership (EP) with bus operators operating in and around Wiltshire under the terms of the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP).

### **Consultation**

This decision has had to be made to tight Government timescales during the Pre-Election Period. Consultation has taken place internally with appropriate officers and the Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene and Flooding.

Key stakeholder and public consultation will take place later in the year in order to develop the BSIP and the EP.

### **Options Considered**

The NBS requires Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) to follow one of three paths:

- Enhanced Partnership
- Franchising – but an LTA following this path must first establish an EP whilst progressing towards a franchise arrangement
- Neither – All Covid related Government support for buses in the LTA's area, including that which is directly granted to bus operators, would be withdrawn from 1 July 2021. This would also include the £974k Bus Services Operators Grant (BSOG) received annually by the Council from government

### **Reason for Decision**

As Wiltshire wishes to preserve and enhance its local bus network it is necessary to opt for either an EP or a franchise model. The EP route was chosen as Wiltshire has positive relations with its local bus operators, and together can achieve the most for Wiltshire's residents and visitors with the greater flexibility that an EP provides.

A franchise would take a considerable amount of time and money to set up, and therefore an EP would need to be established for the interim period. We do not believe that a franchise offers the best option for Wiltshire at this moment in time, but any decision at this stage does not exclude this option to franchise at a later date if circumstances should change.

**DECISION MADE**

Following consultation, I give notice that I have made the decision set out in the attached report.

That Wiltshire Council gives approval to submit its intent to prepare an Enhanced Partnership to the Department for Transport and submits no later than 30 June 2021.

This decision was published on 29 June 2021 and will come into force on 7 July 2021.

**The following report and appendices are attached:**

21-2021 Report Document

**The following supporting documents are available from the officer named above:**

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**Cllr Dr Mark McClelland**  
**Cabinet Member for Transport, Waste, Street Scene and Flooding**

Date: 28 June 2021