



**TEES VALLEY MAYOR**

# **TEES VALLEY ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP SCHEME**

*10<sup>th</sup> October 2022*

**THE TEES VALLEY ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP SCHEME FOR BUSES IS MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH SECTION 138(G)1 OF THE TRANSPORT ACT 2000 BY THE FOLLOWING PARTIES:**

**1. Tees Valley Combined Authority of**

Teesside Airport Business Suite, Teesside International Airport, Darlington, DL2 1NJ

**2. Darlington Borough Council of**

Town Hall, Feethams, Darlington DL1 5QT

**3. Hartlepool Borough Council of**

Civic Centre, Victoria Rd, Hartlepool TS24 8AY

**4. Middlesbrough Council of**

Middlesbrough House, 50 Corporation Road, Middlesbrough, TS1 2RH.

**5. Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council**

09 Kirkleatham St, Redcar TS10 9SH

**6. Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council of**

Church Rd, Stockton-on-Tees TS18 1TW

**7. Arriva North East of**

26 Newport Rd, Middlesbrough TS1 5EA

**8. Stagecoach North East of**

Wheatsheaf, Sunderland, SR5 1AQ

**9. Go North East of**

3rd floor, 41-51 Grey Street, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne NE1 6EE

**10. Hodgsons Coach Operators**

20a Galgate Barnard Castle DL12 8BG

**11. Scarlet Band of**

Welfare Garage, Station Road, West Cornforth, Ferryhill, County Durham, DL17 9LA

**12. Coatham Coaches of**

Transport Yard, Margrove Park Village, Saltburn-by-the-Sea TS12 3BZ

**13. Pauls Travel of**

3 Coniston Rd, Hartlepool TS25 1NJ

**Section 1** - Scope of the Enhanced Partnership Scheme and commencement date

**Section 2** - Obligations on the Local Authorities

**Section 3** - Obligations on Bus Operators

**Section 4** – Governance Arrangements

The Enhanced Partnership (EP) Scheme can only be put in place if an associated EP Plan has been made. Therefore, this document should be considered alongside the associated EP Plan.

The EP Scheme has been jointly developed by the Local Transport Authority (Tees Valley Combined Authority), the Local Highway Authorities (Darlington Borough Council, Hartlepool Borough Council, Middlesbrough Council, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council) and those bus operators that provide local bus services in the EP Scheme area. It sets out the obligations and requirements on both the Local Transport Authority, the Local Highway Authorities and Operators of local bus services to achieve the priorities in the associated EP Plan.

## **SECTION 1 – SCOPE OF THE ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP SCHEME AND COMMENCEMENT DATE**

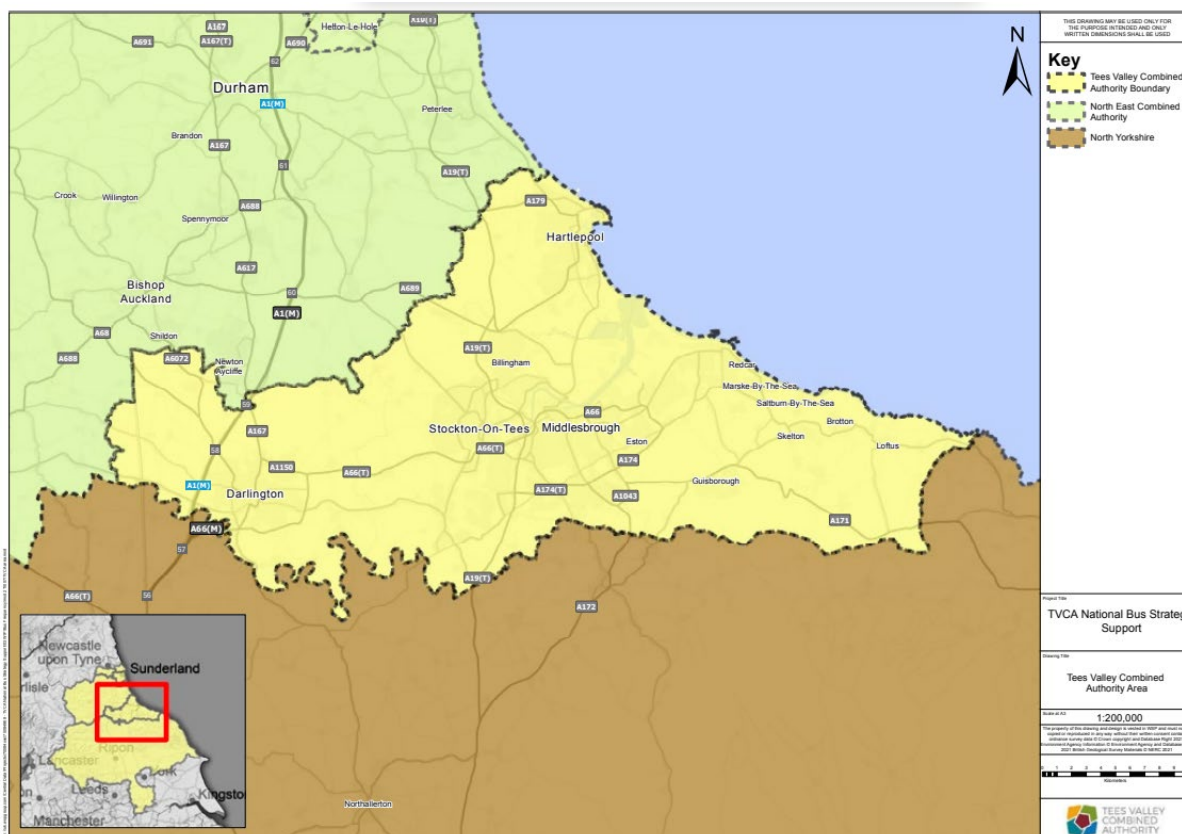
### **Description of Geographical Coverage**

The EP Scheme will support measures to improve the local bus service offer in the entirety of the Tees Valley Combined Authority area, which includes Darlington Borough Council, Hartlepool Borough Council, Middlesbrough Council, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council and Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.

There has been engagement with immediate neighbouring authorities during the preparation of the BSIP and EP, which will continue as the interventions are implemented.

### **Map of EP Plan and EP Scheme Areas**

The map below identifies the geographical area covered by the EP Scheme. It is a single scheme, with the area being the same as that covered by the EP Plan.



## Commencement Date

The EP Plan and EP Scheme are made on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022. They will have no specific end date, but are initially intended to cover the five-year period from 2022/23 to 2026/27.

Progress will be reviewed by Tees Valley Combined Authority on a quarterly basis and publicly accessible reports will be prepared on an annual basis.

## Exempted Services

No registered local bus services are considered to be exempt from the scheme. This situation will be reviewed as additional detail is added to the obligations resulting from measures and facilities, in order to not create any disproportionate impacts.

## SECTION 2 – OBLIGATIONS ON THE AUTHORITIES

### Facilities

Tees Valley Combined Authority and the local highway authorities will endeavour to provide the following Facilities, subject to available funding and statutory processes that the local highway authorities must adhere to e.g. The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

**TVCA and the local highway authorities will deliver new infrastructure investment to prioritise bus on core corridors and improve customer experience, including:**

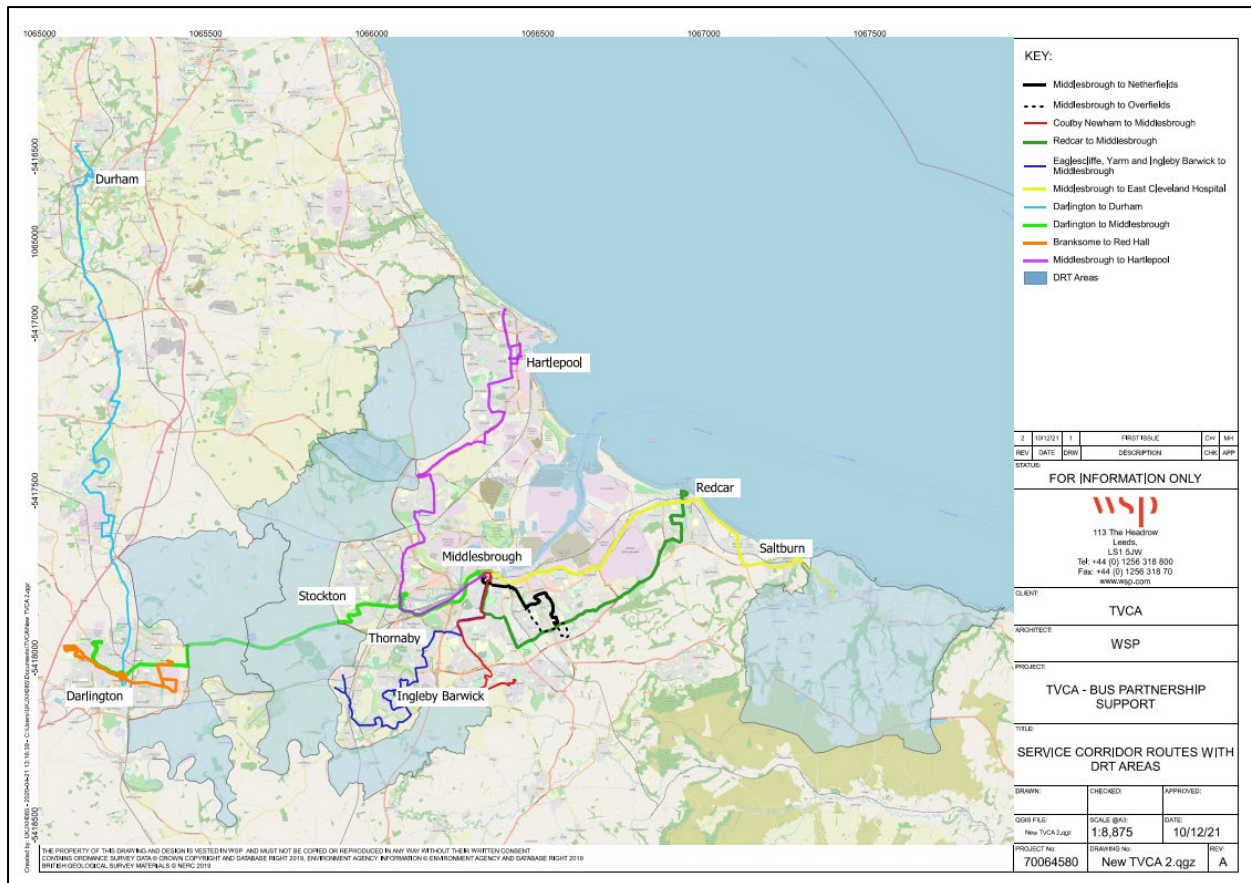
- progressing the delivery of improvements on nine prioritised corridors;
- progressing the delivery of digital infrastructure, including the Urban Traffic Management and Control (UTMC) system and digitally enabled information provision;
- making improvements to customer waiting facilities, including disabled access, shelters and information; and
- improving integration with rail, cycling and walking to provide high quality choice across a range of modes and a seamless customer experience.

The phased programme of improvements on the nine core corridors will be delivered to:

- enhance the bus offer by reducing the impact of congestion and journey time variability on end-to-end bus journey times to make bus a more desirable mode choice;
- improve the punctuality of bus services to employment, education, essential services, retail and leisure opportunities in the five key urban centres (Darlington, Middlesbrough, Stockton-on-Tees, Redcar & Hartlepool);
- increase the number of public transport interchange facilities across the Tees Valley to improve integration between bus, rail and active travel; and
- improve the bus passenger experience and the level of satisfaction with the bus network.

The nine corridors, which are listed below, have been subject to detailed bus corridor assessments against the programme level objectives:

- Middlesbrough to Netherfields/Overfields;
- Coulby Newham to Middlesbrough;
- Redcar to Middlesbrough;
- Eaglescliffe, Yarm and Ingleby Barwick to Middlesbrough;
- Middlesbrough to East Cleveland Hospital;
- Darlington to Durham;
- Darlington to Middlesbrough (via Stockton);
- Branksome to Red Hall (via Darlington); and
- Middlesbrough to Hartlepool.



The priority corridors make up the bus package in the TVCA City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS) programme.

The corridor improvements include a co-ordinated programme of on highway infrastructure improvements, digital upgrades (e.g. UTMC System improvements), bus priority and passenger infrastructure and information upgrades.

Both the fleet decarbonisation and customer experience priorities will initially be focussed on these priority corridors to maximise the impact of the investment and the potential for modal shift.

### Bus Lanes

Details of bus lanes and bus priority facilities to be provided and maintained by the local highway authorities will be added as funding availability is confirmed. This will include existing facilities that remain unchanged.

### Bus Stops

Details of the bus stops and passenger infrastructure to be provided by the local highway authorities will be added upon completion of the current programme to define a consistent approach to bus stop infrastructure, and as funding availability is confirmed.

### Adding to or modifying the list of facilities using a bespoke variation

The powers of bespoke variation will be used to add additional commitments at any point without the need to follow formal variation procedures – although an operator objection mechanism (not necessarily the existing statutory one) will always be required.

## **DECARBONISATION**

**TVCA will support operators in enabling the Tees Valley to be one of the first regions in the UK to have an entirely zero emission local bus fleet, including:**

- supporting the operators to secure funding to decarbonise their fleet;
- decarbonising the fleet across the nine priority corridors identified in the infrastructure section; and
- developing a longer-term decarbonisation strategy with a structured and costed delivery plan.

## **FARES**

**TVCA will support operators in enabling simpler fares and targeted promotions to drive growth, including:**

- a simplified zonal structure and range of tickets;
- targeted discounts on fares to encourage growth in key passenger groups, including younger travellers and those seeking work;
- potential off-peak (evening and weekend) fare promotions to encourage modal shift; and
- implementing a consistency across the Tees Valley in the local enhancements to the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS), specifically a fixed fare of 30 pence for any journey starting before 9:30 am Monday to Friday and a disabled person's companion pass.

## **CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**

**TVCA will work with operators to put the needs of customers at the heart of service delivery and improve information provision with one brand identity, including:**

- developing a single upgraded website, which will host fares, timetable, real-time and mapping information alongside travel planning advice;
- developing an overarching Tees Valley transport brand;

- developing a suite of products, including maps, at-stop timetables and electronic information, underpinned by data processes that will ensure they remain up to date and accurate;
- developing an overarching marketing and communications strategy, which will seek to deliver marketing and promotional activity promoted through various channels, including social media;
- introducing a Tees Valley passenger charter clearly setting out what standards of service customers can expect, which will be underpinned by an equality impact assessment;
- agreeing timetable change dates to limit service disruption for passengers;
- retrofitting audio-visual next stop announcements across all buses in the Tees Valley fleet subject to funding; and
- measuring satisfaction through regular passenger surveys, and using the results to inform our ongoing work programme.

## **NETWORK**

**TVCA will work collaboratively with operators to establish a tiered network focused on commercial services and emerging commercial services, with the potential for supported services e.g. Tees Flex (subject to funding), including:**

To standardise the service offer across the Tees Valley, the concept of a tiered network has been developed based on:

A **Core Commercial Network** of relatively high frequency corridors, linking main hubs and intermediate points along the corridor, including rail stations. These corridors will ideally have a 10-minute headway (by combining and co-ordinating frequencies if needed), and no less than every 15 minutes during Monday to Saturday daytime (07:00 – 18:00), with evening and Sunday frequencies provided as a reasonable proportion of that service level (at least one third). This level of frequency starts to build a concept of ‘turn up and go’.

A **Lower Frequency Commercial Network** of corridors between main points where the core frequencies cannot be sustained. These should still be attractive, operating on ‘clockface’ headways of every 20 or 30 minutes to ensure timetables are easy to follow. Where possible, uneven headways should be avoided as they are harder to communicate to passengers.

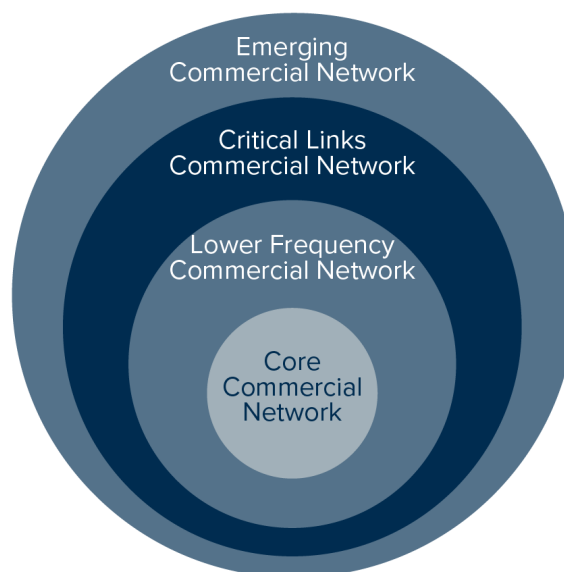
A **Critical Links Commercial Network** of lower frequency services between main centres where services of every 60 minutes or less are provided to ensure essential services or employment opportunities can be reached. These may be tailored to specific demand times (e.g. shift starts).



An **Emerging Commercial Network** in response to changing travel demand created through housing and employment growth, to better connect people to opportunity (including through the proactive engagement of bus operators in major residential and employment developments); and

A **Potential Supported Network** (subject to funding) to provide coverage in areas where it is not currently commercially viable for operators to run services.

The principle of core corridors with key interchange hubs will be used to increase frequencies and accessibility across the network. This can be achieved by consolidating services over common sections and curtailing those which may have a marginal benefit. Whilst this may require some passengers to interchange between services, the higher frequencies and introduction of fully co-ordinated ticketing could make end to end journeys faster overall.



### **Road and Street Works Permitting**

The local highway authorities have implemented permit schemes via Part 3 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 and the Traffic Management Permit Scheme (England) Regulations 2007. The schemes require a works promoter, which will be a utility company, transport authority or highway authority, to apply for a permit to occupy the road.

The permit authority, on considering the application, can request certain conditions are applied to any permit that it grants. This will enable the permit authority to coordinate road works so that disruption and congestion are minimised. The schemes provide the opportunity to carefully consider the impact of roadworks on bus services.

The local highway authorities will work to ensure that the permit schemes are aligned to the priorities in the Enhanced Partnership.

## SECTION 3 – OBLIGATIONS ON LOCAL BUS OPERATORS

### Vehicle standards

Vehicle Standards are to be determined and implemented through the Enhanced Partnership. **Examples of current and expected standards may include\*:**

- Option to pay for tickets through contactless ticketing or mobile apps.
- USB or alternative small device charging available - applicable to manufacturer new vehicles only
- Automatic Vehicle Location equipment installed and kept up to date so it can feed into the new real time information system.
- Audio visual announcements:
  - Next stop audio and visual announcements on both decks - applicable to manufacturer new vehicles only.
- CCTV installed for safety and security. This will provide images inside the vehicle for safety and security and also facing forwards from the vehicle to help identify traffic issues.
- Automatic engine cut off to prevent idling at bus stops longer than necessary to reduce roadside emissions.
- Emissions standards (TBC and agreed with operators), including milestones for standards to be met.

*\*subject to appropriate vehicle technology being in place.*

### Network Stability Protocol

In order to achieve greater network stability and improve confidence in the level of information provided, service changes will only be allowed on an agreed series of four service change dates each year. These dates will be agreed according to the forthcoming year's calendar during the final quarter of the preceding year. The dates will be chosen with a view to a relatively even spacing throughout the year and to avoid peak preparatory workloads during the main holiday periods, and a co-ordinated approach will be taken with neighbouring local authorities where possible.

Each date will apply across the Tees Valley and services may be amended on any of the dates, subject to a maximum of two changes per service in a rolling twelve-month period.

Changes may also be made on other dates if necessary for seasonal services, commercial services, in relation to subsidised bus services, competitive or operational response relating to the commercial network or connections with other

public transport services, but the notification requirements (below) must still be adhered to if at all possible.

### Notification Requirements

Weeks Prior to Implementation	Requirement
11	Notification of intended service changes
10	Provide advance copies of registrations for comment (timely suggestions or amendments to be considered subject to commercial or operational necessity)
6	Registration submission deadline

### Ticketing

#### Bus operators in the Tees Valley will work with TVCA to implement:

- a simplified zonal structure and range of tickets;
- targeted discounts on fares to encourage growth in key passenger groups, including younger travellers and those seeking work;
- potential off-peak (evening and weekend) fare promotions to encourage modal shift; and
- a consistency across the Tees Valley in the local enhancements to the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme (ENCTS), specifically a fixed fare of 30 pence for any journey starting before 9:30 am Monday to Friday and a disabled person's companion pass.

## SECTION 4 – GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

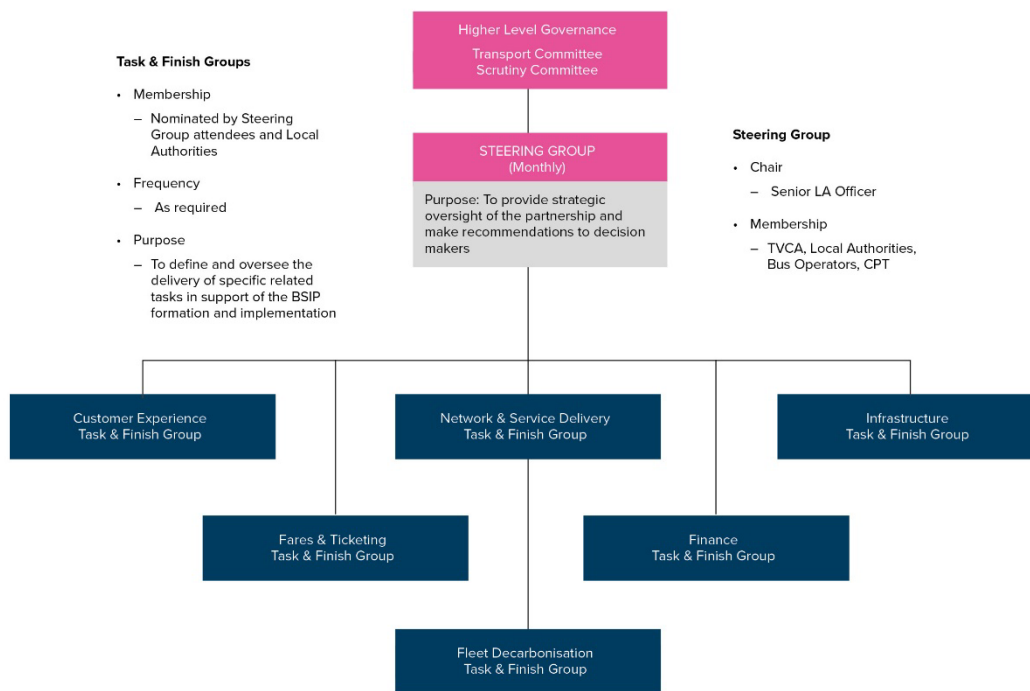
### EP Forum

The formal governance arrangements are defined through a bus partnership steering group ("Forum") whose membership comprises:

- Tees Valley Combined Authority;
- Major Bus Operators;
- Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT); and
- Local Authorities.

The Forum is supported in its decision making by themed working groups, all of which take forward the more detailed workstreams. There will be oversight of the Enhanced Partnership from the TVCA Cabinet, Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Transport Committee. Future content and arrangements for the variation and revocation of the EP Plan and EP Scheme will be considered by the Forum.

The structure of this governance is illustrated in the diagram below.



## Review of EP Scheme

Once the EP Scheme is made, a review will be initiated by TVCA and presented to the EP Forum every six months following publication of data on progress towards targets, as required by the BSIP. This will ensure any necessary action is taken to deliver the targets set out in the BSIP.

The EP Forum can also decide to review specific elements of the scheme on an ad-hoc basis. EP Forum members should contact TVCA using the following email address [transport@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk] explaining what the issue is and its urgency. TVCA will then decide whether to table at the next scheduled meeting or make arrangements for all or the necessary EP Forum members to gather more quickly.

## Bespoke Arrangements for Varying or Revoking the Enhanced Partnership Scheme

Under powers at section 138E of the Transport Act 2000, Enhanced Partnership Scheme Variations will be subject to the bespoke voting mechanism set out in this section.

Changes to or new flexibility provisions added to the EP Scheme under s.138E of the Transport Act 2000 shall only be included in the EP scheme if they satisfy the statutory objection mechanism as set out in The Enhanced Partnership Plans and Schemes (Objections) Regulations 2018.

For other variations, not anticipated by the scheme, the process under section 138(K)(L) and (M) of the Transport Act 2000 will be followed.

#### Proposer of a bespoke variation

Consideration will be given to potential EP Scheme variations highlighted by one of the organisations represented on the EP Forum. The proposer of a variation should demonstrate how this might contribute to achieving the objectives set out in the BSIP, EP Plan and current local transport policies. Such requests should be in writing and submitted to [transport@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk](mailto:transport@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk). TVCA will forward all requests onto all EP Forum members within 5 working days.

#### Decision-making process and bespoke objection mechanism

On receipt of a request for a variation under this section, TVCA will reconvene the EP Forum, giving at least 14 days' notice for the meeting, to consider the proposed variation. If the proposed variation is agreed by all bus operator(s) affected by the change, TVCA, and any affected Local Authority, then TVCA will make the EP Scheme variation within seven working days and publish the revised EP Scheme on its website. An affected operator is considered to be one where at least one of their currently registered local bus services would use the proposed facility or be impacted by the proposed measure.

EP Forum members who are absent or not expressing a view at the meeting (either in person or in writing<sup>1</sup>) will be deemed to be abstaining from the decision.

TVCA, the Local Authority or an operator of local bus services may put forward specific proposals for introducing bus priority measures on an individual section of defined highway or bus corridor.

Those operating local services on that corridor may also put forward a package of improvements to local bus services that they agree to introduce if the bus priority measures are delivered.

If TVCA agrees and the operators of local services on that corridor confirm in writing to TVCA their acceptance of these arrangements, TVCA will vary the scheme using these bespoke arrangements. The obligations on bus operators will come into force 70 days after the agreed package of bus priority measures has been implemented by the LTA.

#### **Revocation of an EP Scheme**

If TVCA or another member of the EP Forum believes it is necessary to revoke the EP Scheme, the EP Forum will be reconvened. If the decision is taken to revoke the

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<sup>1</sup> This could also include proxy voting, if the operators concerned provide written confirmation to TVCA.

EP Scheme it will follow the legislative procedures for revocation or use bespoke arrangements as set out earlier in this section.

TVCA would give notice of a proposal to revoke an Enhanced Partnership plan or scheme in such manner as they consider appropriate for bringing it to the attention of persons in their area or combined area. After giving notice under subsection (4), the authority or authorities will consult:

- a. operators of qualifying local services;
- b. the Competition and Markets Authority; and
- c. such other persons as the authority or authorities think fit.

If, after consulting those persons, TVCA wish to revoke the plan or scheme, they must give notice of their intention to revoke the plan or scheme to persons who were operators of qualifying local services at the qualifying time.

The notice under subsection (6) must:

- a) state the date on which the plan or scheme is to be revoked,
- b) state the authority's or authorities' reasons for revoking the plan or scheme,
- c) state the effect of subsection (8), and
- d) specify the period within which persons who are operators of qualifying local services at the qualifying time may object to the revocation.

TVCA may not revoke the plan or scheme if a sufficient number of the persons who were operators of qualifying local services at the qualifying time object to the revocation of the plan or (as the case may be) the scheme.

If at any point in the future, any area covered by this EP Scheme is included in a bus franchising scheme, the relevant requirements set out in this EP Scheme document will cease to apply to areas covered by the franchising scheme, in line with the arrangements set out in the franchising scheme.<sup>2</sup>

## **Data sharing**

There may be personal data gathered as part of any subsequent user surveys completed or commercially confidential data shared between operators and TVCA (or their appointed consultants). There is a specific requirement to demonstrate a robust process for the Partnership to evaluate the impact of the EP Plan and Scheme (and the BSIP) so it is likely this would include user surveys.

Any personal data gathered would be aggregated and anonymised during the analysis process by the lead authority to ensure that no personal data was shared with the Partnership Board, or any third party.

Any commercially confidential data will be protected by a Non-Disclosure or Data Sharing Agreement and when presented will be aggregated, anonymised and indexed to ensure commercial confidentiality is retained. The owner of the data

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<sup>2</sup> Section 123H(6)-(8) of the Transport Act 2000

would be consulted to ensure this had been completed to a satisfactory level before it is presented.

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