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Greater Bristol Bus Network Major Scheme Business Case

Chapter 2

Strategic



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2. Strategic

INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 In our July 2005 Programme Entry bid submission to the Department we described how the Greater Bristol Bus Network (GBBN) Major Scheme will provide a vital first step in a long-term strategy to tackle congestion, reduce pollution and increase public transport use in the sub-region as a means of maintaining economic growth and delivering regeneration in the Greater Bristol area.
- 2.2 The strategic fit of the GBBN under national, regional and local policies and priorities remains as strong as it did at Programme Entry.
- 2.3 Since the 2005 Programme Entry submission the strategic case for the GBBN scheme has been further emphasised by a number of key regional strategies and local plans, as follows:
- ◆ the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the South West which was submitted to Government in February 2006;
 - ◆ the Government-funded Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Study (GBSTS) – which reported in Spring 2006;
 - ◆ the Final Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP) submitted to the DfT in March 2006 – replacing the Provisional JLTP which framed the Programme Entry bid;
 - ◆ the West of England Partnership’s Vision 2026; and
 - ◆ the prioritisation of major transport schemes across the South West region by the Regional Assembly through the Regional Funding Allocation (RFA) process.
- 2.4 Additionally, the strategic fit for the scheme has also been enhanced by the emergence of the Transport Innovation Fund process.
- 2.5 This chapter first provides a description of the GBBN scheme, noting that the scheme remains identical to that presented in our Programme Entry submission.
- 2.6 It then refreshes the description of the scheme’s strategic fit and reiterates its critical role in tackling the sub-region’s transport problems and accommodating future growth.

SCHEME DESCRIPTION

- 2.7 The GBBN major scheme comprises a significant investment in ten corridors across the Greater Bristol area to deliver substantial improvements in the quality of bus services, progressed in partnership with the major bus operator, First. These ten corridors serve a much wider network of bus services with 70 different bus services using part of these ten corridors.



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- 2.8 Generically the scheme can be defined as a 'Bus Showcase' network comprising a range of measure that will improve the speed, reliability, comfort and image of conventional bus travel across the Greater Bristol area.
- 2.9 It will complement two Bus Showcase routes that have already been taken forward: the north-south 76 and 77 services along the A38 Showcase Corridor between Henbury and Hartcliffe which was completed in December 2003; and the east-west A420 corridor which will be completed in the 2007/8 financial year.
- 2.10 A full description of the scheme is provided in Appendix 2B and is supported by detailed scheme drawings in Appendix 4A of this submission. In summary, the scheme comprises:
- ◆ Bus priority measures along each of the 10 identified corridors such that the impact of traffic congestion on bus travel times and reliability can be reduced, delivered in a way that does not have an adverse effect on travel conditions for other road users;
 - ◆ The provision of new fully accessible low floor buses on the core routes serving the GBBN corridors;
 - ◆ The provision of improved service frequencies and new bus routes, where demand potential is at its greatest;
 - ◆ The provision of significantly improved passenger facilities at bus stops, including new shelters, raised kerbs and, at the most heavily used stops, real time passenger information; and
 - ◆ The provision of improved passenger information in conjunction with the extension of the existing Real Time Passenger Information system (RTPI).
- 2.11 The scheme will also provide for:
- ◆ High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes at locations where bus flows are not high enough to warrant bus-only lanes – the HOV lanes will therefore provide benefits to other road users;
 - ◆ Improved traffic signals using advanced Urban Traffic Control (UTC) technology which will be implemented so as to enable bus priority to be provided at junctions but also providing increased junction capacity for other road users through more efficient operation;
 - ◆ Improved facilities for pedestrians in conjunction with bus priority measures and bus stop access improvements that will encourage greater levels of walking and walking as part of public transport journeys and improve pedestrian safety; and
 - ◆ Improved facilities for cyclists who will be permitted to use bus lanes.
- 2.12 The key measures proposed in each of the 10 GBBN corridors and complementary measures that will accompany its implementation can be found in Annex 2B, Scheme Description, and Annex 2D, Complementary Measures.

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Corridors Served

- 2.13 This MSB brings together all key corridors serving Greater Bristol. In selecting the corridors the following key issues were considered:
- ◆ Current commuting patterns, both by bus and car and existing congestion;
 - ◆ Locations of planned development (housing, employment or retail/leisure);
 - ◆ Corridors with poor public transport provision in relation to patterns of movement;
 - ◆ Access from areas suffering social exclusion;
 - ◆ Access to major hospitals; and
 - ◆ Access to education facilities.
- 2.14 The ten corridors in the bid complete the network of radial corridors serving movements in and out from central Bristol, strengthen public transport links between Bristol and Bath, and provide key public transport improvements from Norton Radstock to both Bristol and Bath to alleviate pressure on this most congested corridor.
- 2.15 In summary they comprise:
- ◆ Corridor 1 : M32 – M4 Junction 19 to Bristol City Centre;
 - ◆ Corridor 2: A4018 – Cribs Causeway to Bristol City Centre;
 - ◆ Corridor 3: A4 – Bath to Bristol City Centre;
 - ◆ Corridor 4: Route 73 – The Mall to Bristol City Centre via Bradley Stoke;
 - ◆ Corridor 5: A432 – Chipping Sodbury and Yate to Bristol City Centre;
 - ◆ Corridor 6: A37 – Midsomer Norton to Bristol City Centre;
 - ◆ Corridor 7: A4174 Avon Ring Road – Filton Roundabout to Hicks Gate Roundabout;
 - ◆ Corridor 8: A370 – Weston-super-Mare to Bristol City Centre;
 - ◆ Corridor 9: A369 – Portishead to Bristol City Centre; and
 - ◆ Corridor 10: A367 – Radstock to Bristol City Centre.

HOW THE SCHEME ADDRESSES TRANSPORT PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES

- 2.16 The Greater Bristol area has around one million residents and provides employment and services for a wide urban and rural hinterland. The area is vital to the South West and the United Kingdom with road and rail links, Bristol International Airport and the Port of Bristol acting as gateways for the region.
- 2.17 The Greater Bristol area is critical to the regional economy and national economy. Per capita GDP of Greater Bristol is 23% above the national average, the 2nd highest in England after London and 34th in Europe ahead of Berlin, Madrid and Rome. Greater Bristol outperforms Manchester, Birmingham and is second only to London in economic output.



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- 2.18 The GBSTS and the JLTP identify the transport problems we face at present and the barrier this creates to regeneration and continued economic growth.

Congestion

- 2.19 The volume of traffic on the JLTP area's roads has grown by 21% over the last ten years. This is faster than the national average. In some areas, such as the North Fringe, where there has been large-scale growth in employment, traffic levels have grown as high as 30%.
- 2.20 This has resulted in widespread problems of congestion. Traffic congestion and journey time unreliability make Bristol one of the most congested cities in Britain. Lost time due to congestion is costing at least £350m a year to the local economy.
- 2.21 Buses are also badly affected by traffic congestion, affecting reliability as well as journey times, undermining the ability of bus services to provide an attractive alternative to the car. Bus services are often held up in congestion such that bus journeys in peak periods are very often considerably longer than in the inter peak. Recent surveys undertaken to inform development of bus punctuality targets confirm this situation with only two-thirds of services found to be starting on time.
- 2.22 Whilst congestion continues to get worse, the 2001 Census highlights that in the JLTP area 21% of journeys to work are under 2km (potential walking distance) of which 45% are made by car. 22% of journeys to work are between 2km and 5km (potential cycling distance) with 68% by car. This problem is particularly acute in the North Fringe of Bristol.
- 2.23 Analysis from GBSTS underscores the challenge for the JLTP. In the period to 2016, car use is forecast to grow and bus use to remain virtually unchanged despite patronage growth in the LTP1 period. If no additional action is taken to tackle congestion, delays will grow and the economic competitiveness of the area will suffer. Additional congestion will also undermine quality of life and give rise to higher levels of pollution.
- 2.24 **The GBN scheme will specifically contribute to tackling congestion in the sub-region's highest demand and congested urban transport corridors by making bus substantially more attractive to existing car users and by reducing the impact of congestion on bus users.**

Social Inclusion and Accessibility

- 2.25 Despite the sub-region's economic success there remain substantial problems of deprivation in parts of Bristol, Weston-super-Mare and other pockets across the area. Poor air quality, severance and high accident figures add to the problems. Access to jobs and services from rural areas is increasingly difficult with the dispersed nature of jobs, loss of local services and general lack of public transport.



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- 2.26 Work undertaken for the JLTP mapping accessibility across the sub-region has revealed wide variations in how people can access health, employment and educational facilities.
- 2.27 One in five households in the JLTP area have no access to a car and are therefore more reliant on public transport, walking and cycling than other sections of the population. Added to this are the 50% of households with access to only one car. They may similarly need to look to these other modes of travel for many journeys, for example where the car is used for commuting and is not available for shopping and other trips during the day.
- 2.28 **The GBN scheme will significantly contribute to improving social inclusion by providing substantially enhanced and new bus services that will improve access to employment and services.**

Road Safety

- 2.29 In the JLTP area, around 500 people are killed or seriously injured on our roads every year. The total number of all casualties in 2004 was 14% higher than the 1994-1998 average although this conceals variations across the JLTP area and particularly between built-up and rural areas.
- 2.30 The factors that cause collisions and injuries are complex. By far the greater proportion of road casualties occurs within the built-up areas (locally, three quarters of all casualties in 2001-2003 occurred on roads with speed limits of 40mph or less).
- 2.31 Here traffic flows are highest, there is a greater density of vehicular turning movements, and the greatest potential for conflict between drivers and other road users.
- 2.32 **By contributing to reducing traffic levels by attracting passengers away from their cars the GBN scheme will help improve road safety.**

Air Quality Noise and Environment

- 2.33 Work undertaken for the JLTP indicated that in the JLTP area, the total CO₂ emissions from road transport in 2004 were 2.25 million tonnes. Motorway and trunk road traffic is the major source accounting for about 55% of the total with urban traffic 30% and traffic on rural roads the remaining 15%. Without intervention total emissions are expected to rise to 2.67 million tonnes in 2011.
- 2.34 There are national air quality targets that the JLTP must meet. These focus on Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). Bath's London Road corridor and a large part of Bristol will not meet these targets and have been declared Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) with Air Quality Action Plans setting out what needs to be done. One of the Bristol AQMAs also covers an inner city area of multiple deprivation



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- 2.35 The Bristol AQMAs cover around 25% of the city including the central area, most major radial routes and the M32 corridor. A second area covers the M5 corridor in Avonmouth. Over 100,000 people live within the AQMAs. Within the central AQMA an estimated 97% of NOx emissions are from road traffic. Currently, the Bath AQMA covers an area east of Bath city centre along the A4 London Road corridor.
- 2.36 **By contributing to reducing traffic levels by attracting passengers away from their cars the GBBN scheme will help reduce emissions from road transport and improve local air quality.**

Sustainable Communities and Economic Growth

- 2.37 The JLTP area is the major focus of population, employment and services in the South West. Almost 400,000 residents were in employment at the time of the 2001 Census and the area provides employment for about 500,000 people.
- 2.38 Land use and development changes have and will continue to have a significant impact on travel behaviour, use of the car and increasing congestion.
- 2.39 Past growth has put pressure on the transport system with increased road traffic and rail usage. There have been some improvements in public transport but much remains to be done. Investment in transport infrastructure has not kept pace with the scale of development. Making good this deficit will lay the foundation for achieving future growth but it must be accompanied by new infrastructure. Potentially these are deterring 'would be investors' with knock on effects for the JLTP area's economy as a whole. Looking beyond 2011 the spatial strategy for the JLTP area (RSS February 2006) foresees the Greater Bristol continuing to experience high rates of growth in jobs, population and housing. Accelerated investment in transport and social infrastructure will be required to enable this to happen.
- 2.40 The RSS proposes that over the period 2006-2026 land is made available to meet growth of about 92,000 jobs at Bristol, up to 20,000 jobs at Bath and for between 8,500 and 10,000 jobs at Weston-super-Mare. Over the period to 2026 the RSS anticipates up to 100,000 dwellings are needed within the Greater Bristol area.
- 2.41 The GBBN scheme specifically supports key elements of the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy. Areas that have experienced rapid growth in housing and employment have not seen the public transport network expand at the same pace. The GBBN will begin to address this imbalance as well as ensure that new areas of development are more adequately served. During the period of this JLTP there will be significant development in areas such as Emersons Green North, Filton Northfield, South Bristol, Weston-super-Mare, Portishead and Western Riverside in Bath: these locations would all be served by the enhanced network.
- 2.42 **The GBBN scheme will provide a vital element of the additional transport infrastructure to support future growth in population and employment in the sub-region.**

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CONSISTENCY WITH NATIONAL POLICIES AND TARGETS

Central Government Objectives

- 2.43 The scheme has been assessed against each of the five key areas of Environment, Safety, Economy, Accessibility and Integration in accordance with published guidance, and the results are presented in Chapter 3 (Appraisal and Value for Money).

GBBN and the Shared Priorities

- 2.44 **The GBBN scheme is fully aligned with the four shared priorities for transport** - which are, in any case, central to the JLTP objectives and strategy. Table 2.1 sets out the key contribution that the GBBN scheme will make.

Table 2.1 – Impact of the GBBN on the Shared Priorities

Shared Priority	Contribution of the GBBN Scheme
Tackling congestion	<p>Critical for providing high quality alternative to the car</p> <p>Provides building block for future upgraded corridors to 'guided bus' or 'future bus'</p> <p>Delivers high quality bus services to existing and planned development to 2011</p> <p>Extensive Urban Traffic Management Control (UTMC) measures allow optimisation of traffic flows at busy junctions to give benefits to buses and at the same time improving general traffic flows</p>
Improving Accessibility	<p>Improved frequencies and coverage of bus network</p> <p>Interchange improvements to support 'feeder' services to core network</p> <p>Improved passenger and information, waiting environments</p> <p>Low-floor services provide benefits for wheelchair users, push chairs and those with mobility impairment.</p> <p>Improved accessibility to key employment, education, retail and leisure destinations</p>
Improving Road Safety	<p>Improved pedestrian and cyclist facilities on all major corridors as part of bid including upgrades to puffin crossings, cycle lanes and pedestrian build-outs</p> <p>Improved control of traffic flows and speeds through extensions to UTMC to all main corridors</p>
Improving Air Quality	<p>By providing real opportunities for mode shift on key corridors, in particular the M32</p> <p>Significant reduction in the average vehicle age (and emissions) through massive bus fleet renewal programme from First</p>

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Shared Priority	Contribution of the GBBN Scheme
<p>Improving Quality of Life</p>	<p>Reduced community severance through better public transport, walking and cycling links</p> <p>Reduced fear of crime through quality infrastructure and reliable services</p> <p>Improved confidence in reliable services allow users to spend less time travelling and waiting</p>

Bus Patronage Growth Targets

- 2.45 The Future of Transport White Paper sets a national target of 12% growth in bus passengers by 2010. This target assumes continued growth in London but also growth in every Government Office region.
- 2.46 In the context of Government targets for achieving public transport growth in the South West, the JLTP area is critically important as it carries about one third of all the bus passengers in the region. Without increases in bus patronage in Greater Bristol it is unlikely that the South West will achieve the regional target
- 2.47 **Implementation of the GBBN is critical to the achievement of bus patronage growth outside London as set out in the Future of Transport White Paper.**

Consistency with National Strategy to Promote Bus Services

- 2.48 This Full Approval bid also brings forward proposals for Quality Bus Partnership Schemes and secondary Quality Bus Partnership Agreements as set out in the Transport Act 2000 and subsequent guidance issued in 2006. The agreements will include the expansion of the commercial network in terms of route changes and frequency enhancements to complement the investment in bus infrastructure from the Department for Transport. We believe that this bid can demonstrate the potential for partnership working to deliver significant growth in the deregulated environment outside of London. Further details on the agreements with operators can be found in Chapter 4.
- 2.49 **The partnership approach to the deliver GBBN is fully supportive of the mechanisms the Department wishes to see applied more widely to improve bus services outside London.**

The Transport Innovation Fund

- 2.50 We were successful in our bid to the Department for pump-priming funding to develop a Transport Innovation Fund (TIF) package. The Department's guidance on TIF continues to evolve. However, it is clear that authorities should be putting forward TIF proposals that will include hard-edged demand management alongside public transport enhancements and other complementary schemes as part of a cohesive package of measures to tackle congestion.

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- 2.51 At the time of the GBBN submission we are continuing to develop our TIF package proposals with a view to making an initial submission to the Department in July 2007.
- 2.52 It is clear that for demand management measures such as road pricing to be implemented good, high quality public transport alternatives to using the car must be available.
- 2.53 Delivery of the GBBN is a necessary precursor to any potential implementation of demand management measures and a vital complement to more radical forms of public transport improvements such as Bus Rapid Transit.
- 2.54 **Implementation of the GBBN is fully consistent with and would be a key precursor for the longer term potential of a TIF Package comprising demand management and complementary public transport measures.**

FIT WITH REGIONAL POLICY AND STRATEGY

Regional Spatial Strategy

- 2.55 The new 2006-2026 Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and supporting Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) for the South West region were submitted to the Government in February 2006 and will be the subject of an Examination in Public starting in April 2007.
- 2.56 As discussed above, the RSS identifies significant growth in population and employment in the sub-region over the coming 20-30 years.
- 2.57 The RSS makes clear (5.2.2) that realising the economic potential of the 'Strategically Significant' Greater Bristol area is absolutely dependent on the sub-region functioning more effectively with well-planned urban environments and transport systems.
- 2.58 To help achieve modal shift the RSS (5.2.6) stresses the need to develop "major public transport systems including bus 'showcase' routes on congested corridors including reallocated road space and re-engineering junctions to give buses priority".
- 2.59 The priorities of the RSS are also reflected in the Regional Economic Strategy that sees urban congestion as a major challenge that could constrain economic success. It aims to improve the region's transport network and one aspect highlighted is the need to increase the reliability and speed of public transport in the region's main urban areas. The GBBN bid is in line with these aims.
- 2.60 **Implementation of the GBBN is fully consistent with the policy measures set out in the RSS.**

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Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Study

- 2.61 The critical importance of the GBBN was highlighted in the Final Report of the Greater Bristol Strategic Transport Study (GBSTS) published in June 2006. The GBSTS was jointly funded by the DfT, the four local authorities, the Highways Agency and the Regional Development Agency, and project managed by the Government Office for the South West.
- 2.62 The study identified a long term strategy for the sub-region consistent with the areas transport challenges and expected growth in population and employment.
- 2.63 The GBSTS recognises and demonstrates the need for significant investment in our area. A total package of funding in excess of £1 billion is identified in the final report. A large proportion of this investment is required in the next 10 years to tackle existing problems, let alone growth.
- 2.64 The GBSTS predicts that road traffic will grow by 10% from 2003 levels by 2011 if nothing is done. During this period of public transport use is predicted to decline steadily. If no action is taken the GBSTS indicates that bus passenger kilometres will have declined by close to 7% by 2011.
- 2.65 The study concluded that “improvements to urban bus services would be a main focus in the strategy for enhancing the public transport system in the short to medium term. The Showcase bus corridors which form the Greater Bristol Bus Network are the subject of a Major Scheme Bid...and it is important that (it) is introduced as soon as practical” (GBSTS Executive Summary).
- 2.66 The principles supporting the GBBN approach are therefore: to provide a high quality bus system that encourages more people to use it, thereby reducing car journeys, leading to reductions in congestion and improvements in air quality, safety and accessibility.
- 2.67 **Implementation of the GBBN is a key explicit recommendation of the GBSTS as the first element of a long term strategy to substantially enhance public transport provision in the sub-region to address current transport problems and future growth.**

Fit with Regional Transport Priorities

- 2.68 The Regional Funding Allocation (RFA) process was introduced by the Government in 2005 to provide a mechanism for regions to advise the Government on regional priorities on the basis of realistic funding assumptions, in order to improve future spending decisions. The regions were invited to produce advice by the end of January 2006, focusing on capital funding for major transport schemes.
- 2.69 The South West Region agreed the Advice to Government on the RFA following consideration by the South West Regional Assembly (SWRA) on 27th January 2006.

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- 2.70 The GBBN was included in a list of major schemes where the region had concluded “that there is a strong case for inclusion within an RFA programme to 2016”.
- 2.71 A technical ‘Refresh’ of the RFA schemes was undertaken in 2006 and the results are being submitted to the Government. The GBBN remains a priority in the regional list of major schemes.
- 2.72 In July 2006 the Secretary of State for Transport confirmed in writing to the SWRA that Government approved the entry of the GBBN into the regional programme.
- 2.73 **The strategic fit of the GBBN at a regional level is such that it has been identified as priority for implementation by the South West Regional Assembly and this view has been confirmed by government.**

FIT WITH LOCAL POLICIES AND PLANS

West of England Partnership Vision 2026

- 2.74 The West of England Partnership’s Vision 2026 sets out a range of conditions and attributes that the sub-region should be seeking to achieve by 2026. These are presented under three main themes: Quality of Life; Connectivity and Accessibility; and the Economy. The Vision also identifies key delivery priorities. Vision 2026 addresses all sectors – not just transport – but does identify a number of key sub-regional objectives and delivery priorities. Specifically these comprise:
- ◆ Reducing the need to travel
 - ◆ Encouraging non-car modes
 - ◆ Discouraging car use
 - ◆ Securing an improved strategic road network
 - ◆ Increasing rail capacity and strengthening public transport
- 2.75 The Vision also identified key economic priorities, as follows:
- ◆ Supporting growth and development;
 - ◆ Spatial planning supported by proper investment in transport;
 - ◆ Supporting the North Fringe’s economic success but accelerating only with improved transport; and
 - ◆ Securing economic regeneration, particularly South Bristol and Weston-super-Mare.

Joint Local Transport Plan Objectives and Strategy

- 2.76 In our Final Joint Local Transport Plan (JLTP) we have set out a challenging 20-30 vision for transport in the sub-region in line with Vision 2026 which will:
- ◆ Strengthen the local economy;

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- ◆ Support rising quality of life and social inclusion;
- ◆ Improve access and links;
- ◆ Ensure that alternatives to the car are a realistic first choice for the majority of trips;
- ◆ Offer real choice - affordable, safe, secure, reliable, simple to use and available to all; and
- ◆ Meet both rural and urban needs.

2.77 The aims and objectives of the JLTP are as follows:

Aims:	Objectives:
To tackle congestion	Promote use of alternatives to the private car; Encourage more sustainable patterns of travel behaviour; Manage the demand for travel by the private car.
To improve road safety	Ensure significant reductions in the number of the most serious road casualties; Achieve improvements for road safety for the most vulnerable sections of the community.
To improve air quality	Improve air quality in the Air Quality Management Areas; Ensure air quality in all other areas remains better than the national standards.
To improve accessibility	Improve accessibility for all residents to educational services; Improve accessibility for all residents to health services and healthy food; Improve accessibility for all residents to employment.
To improve quality of life	Ensure that quality of life is improved through the other shared priority objectives, contributing towards the enhancement of public spaces and of community safety, neighbourhood renewal and regeneration, healthier communities, tackling noise and protecting landscape and biodiversity.

2.78 The GBBN is essential in delivering the aims and objectives of the JLTP.

2.79 A long-term strategy has been developed around the shared priorities of: tackling congestion and improving accessibility, air quality and road safety.

2.80 In developing the strategy the JLTP sets out how transport will contribute towards delivering the longer-term regional vision through strengthening the capacity of the area whilst recognising local needs. In doing this we are responding to the national agenda for change embracing sustainable communities, shared priorities and comprehensive service improvement with strong links to social inclusion, housing and education.

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The Greater Bristol Bus Network as Part of a Wider Programme of Major Schemes

- 2.81 The JLTP translates the transport recommendations of GBSTS into a development programme for Major Schemes, i.e. those costing over £5m and supplementing the schemes and measures funded from the integrated transport and maintenance block allocations.
- 2.82 In developing the Major Scheme investment programme we have considered all bids in a step-by-step way to ensure best use of resources and maximum value for money. Investment is directly linked to tackling the Shared Priorities and supporting regeneration and economic growth. Developing major schemes requires considerable resources from the four Councils and contains the risk of failure associated with any bidding process.
- 2.83 In the first instance, we aim to make best use of the existing highway network to ensure that the maximum capacity possible is achieved to benefit all road users. In making best use of the current network, we need to deliver improvements to the public transport network in order to get the basics right.
- 2.84 The GBBN represents the first element of this overall process focused on getting the best out of the current transport system, supported by the Bath Package major scheme bid submitted for Programme Entry last year.
- 2.85 **The GBBN provides the foundation of the JLTP long-term strategy to reduce car dependency, manage demand and at the same time support regeneration, housing and business growth in the next 20 - 30 years.**

Consistency with the JLTP Bus Strategy

- 2.86 The GBBN will contribute significantly to achieving the key objectives of the JLTP bus strategy, as set out in Table 2.2 below.
- 2.87 Increasing the number of bus passengers is also recognised as essential to securing additional private investment in the bus fleet and expanding the bus network. This increase will be achieved through mode shift away from single occupant car use associated with a successful bid combined with investment from the bus operator and developers. Putting improving bus services at the heart of the JLTP will contribute to increased satisfaction with bus services, improved reliability and punctuality.
- 2.88 **The GBBN will make a major contribution to meeting the JLTP bus strategy objectives.**
- 2.89 It is noted that the GBBN also supports the JLTP Walking Strategy and Cycling Strategy.

Table 2.2 – JLTP Bus Strategy

JLTP Bus Strategy Objective	GBBN Fit
Increase the number of bus passengers	By 2011 the GBBN will have increased patronage by 10% across the bus network – with very substantial growth on the core GBBN corridors
Increase satisfaction with bus services	Provision of new vehicles, improved passenger environment, RTPI and improved journey times and reliability will significantly improve the passenger experience
Improve bus reliability and punctuality and reduce bus journey times; and	Bus priority measures will result in reduced journey times and improved punctuality and reliability
Increase the percentage of the population within 45 minutes journey time by bus of the major centres of Bath, Bristol, Cribbs Causeway, the North Fringe and Weston-super-Mare.	The GBBN corridors focus upon the highest demand routes serving the major centres of population and employment in the sub-region

Consistency with JLTP Targets

- 2.90 The targets and indicators put forward in Chapter 12 of the Final JLTP are challenging, given the scale of the transport problems in the Greater Bristol area. Three potential outcomes for 2010/11 have been identified assuming different levels of funding:
- ◆ Option A: Financial guideline funding only;
 - ◆ Option B: Financial guideline + two major schemes; and
 - ◆ Option C: Financial guideline + two major schemes + demand management.
- 2.91 Of the 24 targets in the JLTP the GBBN will contribute towards improved outcomes in 15 of the targets. The targets show clearly how this MSB is critical to achieving outcomes across the four shared priorities. With this MSB there will be significantly greater progress towards delivering the strategy than with indicative funding alone.
- 2.92 The JLTP contains the following targets, which are linked to the two Major Scheme Bids:
- ◆ **Number of Bus Journeys (BV102):** 12% growth in annual number of bus journeys (compared to 3% with indicative funding only);

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- ◆ **Bus Satisfaction (BV104):** Achieve 60% satisfaction (compared with 44% with indicative funding only);
- ◆ **Accessibility to Health (LTP1a):** Achieve 75% of households, who live within 30 minutes travel time by public transport of those health facilities in the Bristol Health Service Plan (compared to 70% with indicative funding only); and achieve 82% of households, who live within 60 minutes travel time by public transport of those health facilities in the Bristol Health Service Plan (compared to 78% with indicative funding only);
- ◆ **Accessibility to Employment (LTP1b):** 80% of households who live within 40 minutes travel time by public transport from key employment sites (compared to 79% with indicative funding only);
- ◆ **Accessibility to Education (LTP1c):** % of 16-19 year olds who live within 30 minutes travel time by public transport from a further education establishment (target to be determined following further partnership work but improved access will be delivered);
- ◆ **Accessibility to Education (LTP1c):** % of 16-19 year olds who live within 60 minutes travel time by public transport from a further education establishment (target to be determined following further partnership work but improved access will be delivered);
- ◆ **Change in Area Wide Road Mileage (LTP2):** Restrict growth to 11.0% i.e. reduce predicted growth by 1.0% across the plan period (compared with restrict growth to 12.0% i.e. cap growth at current levels - based on current forecasted traffic growth in plan area);
- ◆ **Number of Cycling Trips (LTP3):** 140 indexed against 2003/4 baseline (compared with 130 with indicative funding only);
- ◆ **Bus Punctuality (LTP5):** For timetabled services, the 2010 target will be based on a trajectory of meeting a 90% or 1.25 minutes excess waiting time target by 2012/13 (compared with 2014/15 with indicative funding only);
- ◆ **Number of Deaths and Serious Injuries (All Ages) (BV99x):** To reduce by 25% from 2001 – 2004 average (compared to 20% reduction with indicative funding only);
- ◆ **Number of Slight Injury Casualties (BV99z):** To reduce by 10% from 2001-2004 average (compared to no increase for indicative funding only);
- ◆ **Air Quality (LTP8):** To reduce the concentration of NO₂ in local air in Bristol to 44.0µg/m³ (46.0µg/m³ with indicative funding only);
- ◆ **Air Quality (LTP8):** To reduce the concentration of NO₂ in local air in Bath to 40.0µg/m³ (47.0µg/m³ with indicative funding only);
- ◆ **Rail (Local 1):** Increase rail passenger journeys by 18% from 2003/4 base (compared with 15% with indicative funding only);
- ◆ **Park and Ride (Local 2):** Number of passengers (boardings) on P&R services: Increase the number of park and ride passenger journeys by 2010/11 based on 2003/04 levels – target to be determined but will be higher than with indicative funding only.

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- ◆ **Congestion (LTP7):** The Congestion Delivery Plan (February 2007) sets a target to accommodate an expected increase in travel of 5% (on key routes in Greater Bristol) with only a 13% change in journey times. The GBBN is explicitly linked to this target and will ensure progress remains on track.

Consistency with LTP1 Strategy

- 2.93 We have already demonstrated in LTP1 that by working in partnership with the main bus operator First, significant bus patronage growth can be achieved with the implementation of 'showcase' bus routes. The high quality travelling experience has seen growth on individual routes in the region of 12%. This growth, however, is against a backdrop of stagnation or decline across the rest of the bus network resulting in only modest growth across the network as a whole.
- 2.94 With substantial investment in infrastructure to protect buses from the impact of congestion both the Councils and the main bus operator, First, jointly believe that this area can continue to buck the underlying trend of decline in passengers. This can be achieved across the whole network through the comprehensive network wide delivery of 'showcase' standard services. These measures will be combined with comprehensive marketing and promotion campaign to win 'hearts and minds' and change the common perceptions of the bus service (see Appendix 4M, Marketing Plan).
- 2.95 First have practical experience of the 'halo' effect that reinforces this joint vision. Their commercial experience is that through network wide 'big bang' improvements, patronage increases over and above that delivered on an incremental corridor by corridor basis. This is supported by the GBSTS and the business case work undertaken for this bid.
- 2.96 **Implementation of the GBBN is fully consistent with the successful roll-out of Bus Showcase principles and partnership working during the LTP1 period.**

PUBLIC AND POLITICAL SUPPORT

- 2.97 The GBBN Major Scheme bid was progressed at the same time as the JLTP. This facilitated wide ranging consultation being carried out on the GBBN concept in conjunction with that on wider transport strategy and policies. The four Councils have placed great emphasis on working with the public and local stakeholders in the development of the JLTP strategy. Consultation began in summer 2004 and continued into winter 2006. Results from public events and consultation in spring and winter 2005 were incorporated into the Final JLTP. The consultation in winter 2006 has been influential in shaping the planned Major Scheme 'Big Bang' consultation.
- 2.98 To summarise, consultation on the GBBN bid has been both positive and extensive. Support for the bid has been unanimous from members of the public, Members, Parish Councillors, stakeholders, Joint Scrutiny Members and statutory consultees. This support recognises the urgent need for the public transport improvements



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identified in the GBBN bid in our area and the wide ranging sectors that will realise the benefits following implementation.

- 2.99 Further Information about the consultation undertaken for the GBBN and the support for the GBBN can be found in Appendix 4J.

Statutory Consultation

- 2.100 Statutory consultation has been undertaken and responses received from the Environment Agency, English Heritage, English Nature and The Countryside Agency.

The Environment Agency says *“We have no particular objections at this stage to the proposed schemes, but would wish to be further consulted on the details of any schemes, particularly where there are proposed to be works near watercourses, which includes rivers, drains and ditches. This is necessary because the proposed works may have an impact on flood risk, conservation or pollution prevention issues. We would also wish to be consulted on any schemes that could have the potential to increase the volume of surface run-off.”*

English Heritage says *“It is important to point out that English Heritage support the infrastructure provision in public transport and we welcome the boost to sub-regional prosperity that such activity will bring*”

The Countryside Agency says *“For your records the Countryside Agency has no comments to make in this instance.....”*

- 2.101 The full responses from the statutory consultees are annexed to Appendix 4J.
- 2.102 **The GBBN scheme has widespread support at a number of levels showing that it aligns the strategic aims and objectives of stakeholders and the public.**