

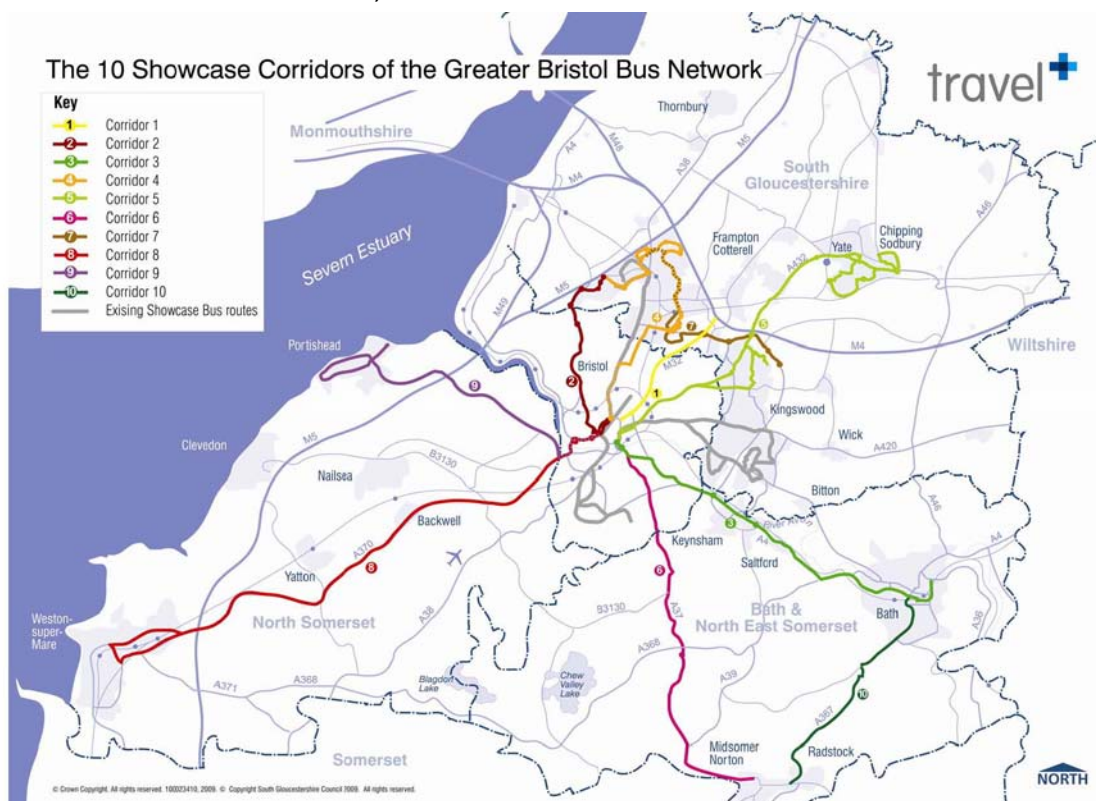
## Greater Bristol Bus Network Progress Update

### Purpose of the report

1. To provide an update on the successful progress in delivering the Greater Bristol Bus Network (GBBN) for the first half of 2009, and the end of the financial year projection.
2. Also, as per the previous report, to inform members of change requests approved at programme board level and to request approval for new major change requests.

### Background

3. Since funding was approved in May 2008 all four authorities and First have been working to deliver GBBN.
4. The scheme involves over £70million investment in improving bus services. It comprises of £42.3m from the Department for Transport (DfT), £20m from the bus operator First, £5.7m developer contributions and £1.8m local authority contributions.
5. The scheme introduces ten showcase bus corridors (see map), which will include bus priority measures, improved bus shelters, real-time information (which tells you when the bus is due) and new buses.



## Work completed to date – update on the 10 corridors

6. To manage the delivery of the programme, the ten corridors have been broken down into individual task orders. Table 1 shows the tasks completed to date and table 2 shows the task orders to be completed by March 2010.
7. Progress on delivering the task orders has been outstanding and despite a delay in the DfT approval for GBBN, all of the remaining grant funded tasks are programmed to be completed by the original date of June 2011.

Table 1 – Task orders completed to date

Corridor	Corridor Name	Task
1	M32	M32 Junction 2 to Houlton Street bus lane
2	A4018	A4018 / Lysander Road Roundabout bus lane
2	A4018	New Buses - Corridor 2
3	A4	A4 Hicks Gate bus lane and signals
4	Route 73	Filton Avenue / Lockleaze Road Signals
4	Route 73	New Road Bus Link
5	A432	New Buses - Corridor 5
6	A37	A37 Haverstock Road to Three Lamps
7	A4174	A4174 Westbound to B4058 Frenchay slip road widening
7	A4174	New Buses - Corridor 7
8	A370	A370 Plimsoll Bridge traffic signals
8	A370	B3440 Locking Road / New Bristol Road traffic signals
8	A370	M5 J21 Westbound Approach bus lane
8	A370	New Buses - Corridor 8
9	A369	A369 Bridge road signals
10	A367	Bus Stops - A367 B&NES
10	A367	A367 Odd Down bus lane

Table 2 – Task orders to be completed by the end of March 2010

Corridor	Corridor Name	Task Name
2	A4018	Bus Stops – The Mall
2	A4018	Bus Stops – A4018 South Gloucestershire
3	A4	A4 Twerton Fork upgrading signals for bus priority
3	A4	Bus Stops – Hicks Gate to Callington Road
3	A4	Bus Stops – Callington Road to City Centre
3	A4	New Buses – Corridor 3
4	Route 73	Bus Stops – Route 73 Filton Avenue
4	Route 73	Bus Stops – Route 73 South Gloucestershire
4	Route 73	Filton Avenue Northbound Bus Lane
5	A432	Bus Stops – A432 Royate Hill to Muller Road
6	A37	Bus Stops – A37 B&NES
6	A37	A37 Staunton Lane Signals
6	A37	New Buses – Corridor 6
7	A4174	Abbey Wood Roundabout Signalisation
7	A4174	A4174 Abbey Wood Eastbound Bus Gate
8	A370	A370 Congresbury Bus Lane
9	A369	New Buses – Corridor 9

Corridor	Corridor Name	Task Name
10	A367	A367 Midford Road to Red Lion
10	A367	A367 Wellsway Lower
10	A367	A367 Bear Flat

### Available funds, approved budgets and current estimates

8. The total funds allocated to deliver the entire GBBN programme are set out in the table below. This is broken down by authority and First along with a contingency change budget. This also includes the current estimated cost for delivering all schemes.
9. The figures include additional money from First (£2.456m) to enhance the buses and also some additional local contributions to enhance schemes and deliver them on budget.

Table 3 – Total funds, approved budget and current spending estimate

	Total Funds	Approved Budget	Current Estimate
Bath & NE Somerset	£5,375,899	£5,375,899	£4,795,400
Bristol City Council	£13,875,308	£13,875,308	£13,875,308
North Somerset Council	£4,109,280	£4,109,280	£3,899,280
South Gloucestershire Council	£24,732,896	£24,732,896	£24,365,605
First	£22,456,500	£22,456,500	£22,456,500
Change Budget	£2,295,109		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£72,844,992</b>	<b>£70,549,883</b>	<b>£69,392,093</b>

10. The BCC figures include all capitalised maintenance contributions in relation to the Real Time Passenger Information task order.
11. A number of schemes are currently being delivered on or under budget due to cost savings and these savings will be returned to change budget. Whilst there remains a risk of cost increases on schemes at an early stage of development, options are being explored around how any residual funding might be used (subject to DfT approval) on enhanced or additional schemes that could substantially improve the overall GBBN programme.

### Expenditure progress to date

12. The budget is regularly reviewed to ensure that spending is on track to meet the DfT targets. Table 4 sets out the accumulative total spend to date, and the total estimated spend for the end of the financial year 31 March 2010.

Table 4 – GBBN spend to date and predicted total spend for end of March 2010

	<b>Spend to date</b>	<b>Predicted total spend for end of financial year</b>
Bath & NE Somerset	£1,315,600	£2,520,882
Bristol City Council	£3,485,352	£4,495,910
North Somerset Council	£858,103	£2,021,784
South Gloucestershire Council	£2,945,318	£7,360,475
First	£16,918,500	£22,456,500
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£25,522,873</b>	<b>£38,855,551</b>

13. The DfT grant spend to the end of quarter 1 this year is: £7,770,996. Predicted total spend on the DfT grant to year end is: £15,848,836.
14. The DfT grant estimates are below the Q1 estimate of £17,483,704 (which includes £1.0m provision from the change budget should it be required, which is not included in the forecast spent to year end). In addition as more detailed design work is being completed cost savings are being achieved and some schemes have slightly been re-profiled. As mentioned previously, officers are establishing the options for using any potential savings.

### Change requests

15. Change requests are changes to task orders from the initial programme which require approval at different levels as per the programme handbook. For major change requests these must be raised at JTEC level and may require further approval from the DfT. The change requests in table 5 are previous requests for the JTEC to note.

Table 5 - Change requests previously approved

<b>Change Request Number</b>	<b>Partner</b>	<b>Task Name</b>	<b>Total Cost Impact</b>	<b>Call on Change Budget</b>	<b>Major Change</b>	<b>Approval Level</b>	<b>DfT Approval Required</b>
4-001	SGC	Abbey Wood Roundabout Signalisation	£323,000	£323,000	No	TEMM (now JTEC)	No
4-002	SGC	A4174 Westbound to B4058 Frenchay	£35,495	£35,495	No	PB	No
4-004	SGC	New Road Bus Link	£53,705	£53,705	No	PB	No

16. Change request 4-001 was approved by the Transport Executive Members Meeting (now JTEC) on 18 December 2008.
17. Change requests 4-002 and 4-004 were approved by the Programme Board on 4 March 2009. These requests were for additional funding following more detailed design work, unexpected ground conditions, and also for additional traffic management and passive sign posts to ensure the safety of the schemes.

18. There are three additional major change requests requiring Joint Transport Executive Committee approval:

1. 4-003 for the A4018 Lysander Road Roundabout request by South Gloucestershire Council

The request is to reduce the bus lane length by 24 meters from the original length of 90 meters. This is a result of further detailed design work which has identified that the full bus lane length cannot be achieved without reducing road safety on the approach to the roundabout. It is not anticipated that there will be any significant dis-benefit to buses during normal operating hours, and during the heaviest period of congestion, the Christmas and January sales period, significant benefits will still be gained by the shortened bus lane. The scheme has been reviewed to confirm that it continues to deliver value for money and the revised scheme is therefore recommended.

2. 4-005 route 73 Pegasus Road request by South Gloucestershire Council

It is recommended not to proceed with this scheme following the planning submission for the North Field development which includes a new link between the A38 to Merlin Road. This new alignment proposed by the developer has reduced the proposed scheme benefit to no significant benefit for buses. Therefore it is recommended that this scheme is removed from the project.

3. 4-010 route 73 signal priority requested by South Gloucestershire Council

As per the previous change request, the proposal submitted by the developer for the North Field development has altered the benefits of this scheme as this now includes bus priority measures to be delivered by the developer. Therefore it is recommended that this scheme is removed from the project.

19. The total financial impact of these three major change requests would be a net saving of £576,000 against the figures shown in table 3. This saving would be returned to the change budget if the requests receive approval giving a revised change budget of £2,871,109.

20. Change request 4-003 has also highlighted the current governance arrangements which require any shortening or lengthening of bus lane to be submitted to JTEC for approval irrespective of length. Officers propose a 20% threshold limit for bus length changes, anything under 20% to be submitted to the programme board for approval.

## **Land Acquisition**

21. A number of schemes at Cribbs Causeway, Great Stoke Way and adjacent to the A4174 Ring Road between Coldarbour Lane and the M32 require land to be acquired to enable the works to be undertaken, and South Gloucestershire Council advertised a Compulsory Purchase Order in April 2009. Following a number of objections to the Order, a Public Inquiry date was set for September 2009, but due to the unavailability of a Planning Inspector, the date for the Inquiry has now been arranged for early November. It is expected that the Inspector will make recommendations to the Secretary of State by February 2010.

22. In parallel with the compulsory purchase procedure, South Gloucestershire Council is in negotiation with landowners seeking negotiated settlements for the land, and is hopeful that this will allow early purchase and access of the land. There is a risk that the negotiation route will not be successful, and there will then be total reliance on the compulsory purchase of the land.
23. The land acquisition, whether by negotiation or compulsory purchase order, may have an impact on timing of the delivery and cost of these schemes.

### **Developer funding**

24. The Major Scheme Bid refers to the receipt of £5.7m in total of development funding linked to committed developments, particularly in the North Fringe of Bristol. Due to the downturn in the national economy and its impact on the housing industry, these developments have not progressed as expected, and this had a consequential effect on the delivery of schemes funded by developer contributions. Whilst it is expected that these developments will progress in future, there is now a high risk that the developments might not start by June 2011. This will have a slight impact on the benefits of the overall scheme, and will mean that the benefits are accrued until the schemes funded by developer contributions are completed. At this stage it is not possible to predict when these might come forward. In the case of corridors 4 and 7 within South Gloucestershire, where developer funded schemes are planned, the predominant impact of slippage will occur on Corridor 7, and east of the M32 corridor. Any delay to these developer funded schemes will not affect the benefits to other grant funded corridors.
25. Officers are requesting approval from JTEC to enter into a discussion with the DfT around the use of any scheme savings which may accrue and whether these could be reallocated to deliver some developer contribution funded schemes. Since this would not increase the overall RFA funding for the scheme, the benefit-cost ratio should not be adversely affected by this proposal and it would assist in mitigating the impact of the shortfall in developer contributions.

### **Quality Bus Framework**

26. The Quality Bus Framework comprises of three documents: a draft Memorandum of Understanding, a draft Statutory Quality Bus Partnership Scheme (QBPS) agreement and a supporting Quality Bus Partnership Agreement (QBPA) for each corridor.
27. The QBPS as drafted is a statutory scheme under the Transport Act 2000. The QBPA is a voluntary agreement between the local authorities and First (and possibly other bus operators).
28. In response to the Local Transport Act, November 2008 the Programme Board has formed a Public Transport Advisory Sub-Group. The purpose of the sub-group is to:
  1. Assess the impact of the new Act on the provisions in the QBPS and QBPA agreements and amend as required. Note that the Act has renamed QBPS as Quality Partnership Scheme (QPS) and QBPA as Voluntary Partnership Agreement (VPA).

2. Develop a robust procedure for establishing a QPS (formerly QBPS) and supporting VPA (formerly QPBA) for each corridor.
  3. Assess how the Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnership might impact on and interface with the QPS and VPA.
29. The sub-group comprises representatives from each authority plus First Bus, West of England Partnership and the Government Office for the South West attending as and when required. Bristol City Council have also kindly put forward a legal representative.

### **Real Time Passenger Information**

30. An OJEU Notice was issued in May which resulted in 11 pre-qualification questionnaires. These are currently being evaluated for approval by the Programme Board in September.
31. The head agreement with the winning bidder will rest with Bristol City Council and this will in turn be supported by supplementary agreements with the three other authorities and First (and possibly others).

### **Marketing and Communications**

32. The marketing and communications is currently being delivered as per the programme. The Travel+ website is currently in development and will go live in early September. In addition a road signage handbook is being developed with a view to ensuring that GBBN is properly and consistently presented as a flagship, DfT funded programme.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

33. The Major Scheme Business Case included a monitoring framework setting out a range of indicators including satisfaction, patronage and bus reliability.
34. A baseline survey has been undertaken to establish current satisfaction, the operator supplies patronage data and the bus reliability is monitored as part of the Joint Local Transport Plan framework. The next step is to complete a series of surveys once each corridor is completed.

### **Recommendations**

1. The committee notes the progress on GBBN to date, change requests approved by the Programme Board and the financial update.
2. The committee approves the major change requests so they can be taken forward to the DfT for full approval.
3. The committee delegates to the programme board the authority to approve changes to bus lane length of up to 20% with periodic reports of decisions taken in this respect being brought to the committee for noting.

4. The committee authorises the SRO to enter into formal discussions with DfT around the possible use of residual funding to address the potential shortfall in developer contributions required to complete the GBBN scheme by the due date.

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