

## REPORT TO THE INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES COMMITTEE – 8 JUNE 2022

### PARTNERSHIP REVIEW – NORTH EAST OF SCOTLAND BUS ALLIANCE

#### 1 Executive Summary/Recommendation

1.1 The Committee, at its meeting on 18 June 2020 (Item 16), reviewed the Council's participation in North East of Scotland Bus Alliance. The reason for this report is to facilitate a further review of the Council's participation in the Bus Alliance, in line with the Council's Partnership Policy and to seek approval of continued participation. The report also outlines for the Committee's information, the proposal by the Bus Alliance partners to review and revise the partnership agreement, in line with the emerging new transport authority partnership powers under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019.

#### 1.2 The Committee is recommended to:

**1.2.1 Consider and endorse the partnership review of 'North East of Scotland Bus Alliance', as set out in Appendices 2 and 3 of this report;**

**1.2.1 Agree that the Council continue to participate in the partnership for a further two years; and**

**1.2.3 Note the proposal by the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance partners to review and revise the partnership agreement, in line with the emerging transport authority partnership powers under the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019.**

#### 2 Decision Making Route

2.1 Aberdeenshire Council's Partnership Working Policy requires that a partnership assessment and a risk assessment must be undertaken before joining a partnership and every two years thereafter.

2.2 The Quality Partnership for Public Transport was originally established in 2009 and following a review of the partnership, revised participation and governance arrangements were entered into in June 2018. The Council's participation in the renamed North East of Scotland Bus Alliance was agreed by Committee at its meeting on 10 May 2018 (Item 6).

2.3 In line with the Council's Partnership Working Policy the Council's participation in the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance was reviewed by the Committee at its meeting on 18 June 2020 (Item 16), and continued participation for a further two years agreed at that time.

2.4 The current voluntary partnership consists of Aberdeenshire Council, Aberdeen City Council, Nestrans, Bains Coaches, First Aberdeen, and Stagecoach Bluebird. Under the current arrangements the partnership forms the agreed basis of the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance and is overseen

by the Bus Alliance Board which consists of representatives from each of the partners and a representative from Bus Users Scotland. The Board has an independent Chair.

- 2.5 The overriding aim of the Bus Alliance is to stabilise, arrest and, in turn, reverse the decline in bus patronage across the North East of Scotland.
- 2.6 To facilitate this aim Aberdeen City Council submitted a successful Bus Partnership Fund (BPF) bid to Transport Scotland on behalf of the Bus Alliance, details of which were set out in a report to Committee at its meeting on 11 March 2022 (Item 10).

### **3 Discussion**

#### **3.1 Continued Participation in the Bus Alliance**

3.1.1 When last reviewing the partnership, the Committee noted the Bus Alliance's focus on progressing appraisals of the key commuter corridors into Aberdeen with a view to identifying bus service improvement measures that could form the basis of a statutory Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) for each corridor and, in turn, funding bids to the Scottish Government's Bus Partnership Fund (BPF).

3.1.2 At its meeting on 21 January 2021 (Item 15), the Committee agreed a revised approach to bus service delivery arising out of a 'Clean Sheet Review' of the Council's supported bus network. This revised approach included the following action:

*"The Council should also work in partnership with operators, principally Stagecoach Bluebird, to maintain and strengthen the commercial viability of the mainline corridors and commercial town services, through the development of statutory Bus Service Improvement Partnerships (BSIPs) and associated bids for supporting bus priority and infrastructure through the Scottish Government's Bus Partnership Fund (BPF), where applicable. This should be progressed wherever possible under the auspices of the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance".*

3.1.3 As outlined in paragraph 2.6, Aberdeen City Council subsequently submitted a successful of BPF bid on behalf of the Bus Alliance. This award of grant funding is intended to: progress enabling works on South College Street, Aberdeen; identify bus priority and other supporting bus and active travel measures on the key radial corridors; and, advance the vision to introduce an Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART) system.

3.1.4 Current work of the Bus Alliance is focussed on progressing the various strands of the BPF award, with a view to submitting further applications for BPF funding, allied to the proposed ART system. In particular, significant work has been undertaken in relation to a number of multi-modal corridor studies and the Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART) 'Case for Change'. Both of these workstreams are the subject of a bulletin report to members of to this Committee.

3.1.5 Continued Council participation in the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance remains important as a means to facilitate bus service improvements across Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire, through the Council's agreed Passenger Transport Strategy approach of partnership working. Participation should also assist in addressing several key Local, Regional and National Strategy objectives, and, in turn, various Council Priorities. The strong network across the Alliance partners has also aided the response to the Covid 19 emergency and will continue to aid the recovery planning.

### 3.2 Proposal to revise the Quality Partnership agreement

3.2.1 In order to secure further BPF funding Transport Scotland have advised that existing voluntary partnerships should be working towards implementation of a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP), the statutory bus partnership enabling power included in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 which is intended to address the difficulties identified with previous legislation on statutory Quality Partnerships.

3.2.2 Given the advanced nature of several of the multi-modal corridor projects, further BPF funding applications are envisaged towards the end of the current calendar year, in order to continue the momentum achieved to date. This challenging timescale means that progress requires to be made towards the implementation of a BSIP, although Transport Scotland have also advised that guidance on BSIPs will not be made available until sometime during 2023.

3.2.3 Although not identical, BSIPs are in some respects similar to existing Enhanced Partnerships, and associated 'BSIPs', in England and it is therefore intended to progress revision of the current Quality Partnership agreement along the lines of an Enhanced Partnership, whilst in doing so taking onboard any advice or comments received from Transport Scotland on a draft revised agreement.

3.2.4 The continued participation of the Council in the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance under any revised BSIP arrangement will be the subject of a further report to Committee.

## 4 **Council Priorities, Implications and Risk**

4.1 Bus services help deliver the Strategic Priority "Health & Wellbeing" within the Pillar "Our People," by tackling poverty and inequalities'; Strategic Priority "Resilient Communities " within the Pillar "Our Environment", through helping to address issues of climate and sustainability; and Strategic Priority "Economy & Enterprise" within the Pillar "Our Economy" by having the right people, in the right place, doing the right thing, at the right time.

4.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

Subject	Yes	No	N/A
Financial		X	
Staffing		X	
Equalities and Fairer Duty Scotland	X		
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing	X		
Health and Wellbeing	X		
Town Centre First	X		

- 4.3 Continued participation of the Council in the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance should enable the partnership to lever additional funding for bus priority measures and other complementary bus service improvements within both Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire. The partnership approach should also secure the necessary funding for the vision of ART to be progressed.
- 4.4 In addition to providing the opportunity to bid for further Scottish Government BPF funding, development of the proposed BSIP should permit a basis for achieving match-in kind funding from bus operators, for example, fleet improvements and enhanced service levels.
- 4.5 The development of the proposed BSIP will require additional external resource with funding for this consultancy support to be sourced from the BPF or alternatively the Nestrans Bus Action Plan 2022/23 Revenue Budget allocation. Aberdeenshire Council staffing input will be covered through existing staff resource.
- 4.6 An Integrated Impact Assessment has been carried out as part of the development of the proposals set out above. It is included as **Appendix 1** and there are positive impacts as follows: in terms of Equalities both in relation to protected groups and socio-economic groups; Health Inequalities; Sustainability and Climate Change in terms of emissions, resources and the quality of the environment; and, the Towns Centre's First principle.
- 4.7 The following Risk has been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:
- ACORP005 Working with Other Organisations
- However, this risk is considered low given that appropriate governance arrangements are in place both in terms of the overall partnership and BPF projects arising as a consequence of the partnership.
- 4.8 The following Risk has been identified as relevant to this matter on a Strategic Level:
- ISR011 Keeping communities connected through the provision of an affordable, accessible, reliable and well-connected passenger transport service

Again, the risk is considered low given the overall aim of the partnership is to reverse the decline in bus patronage through the provision of improved bus services.

## **5 Scheme of Governance**

- 5.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments are incorporated within the report and are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.
- 5.2 The Committee is able to consider this item in terms of Section F1.1f of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to Transportation policy issues and resource matters, and therefore is within the remit of the Committee.

**Alan Wood**  
**Director of Environment & Infrastructure Services**

Report prepared by Richard McKenzie, Passenger Transport Manager.  
25 May 2022

## **List of Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Integrated Impact Assessment
- Appendix 2 - Partnership Working Policy - Partnership Assessment : Bus Alliance
- Appendix 3 - Partnership Working Procedure - Risk Assessment : Bus Alliance

# Aberdeenshire Council

## Integrated Impact Assessment

### Review of NE of Scotland Bus Alliance / Quality Partnership

Assessment ID	IIA-000583
Lead Author	Richard McKenzie
Additional Authors	Marion MacKay
Service Reviewers	Ewan Wallace
Subject Matter Experts	Suzanne Rhind, Susan Forbes, Claudia Cowie, Kakuen Mo, Christine McLennan
Approved By	Ewan Wallace
Approved On	Wednesday May 25, 2022
Publication Date	Wednesday May 25, 2022

# 1. Overview

This document has been generated from information entered into the Integrated Impact Assessment system.

Two-yearly review of the Council's participation in the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance / Quality Partnership, in line with the Council's Partnership Working Policy

During screening 8 of 10 questions indicated that detailed assessments were required, the screening questions and their answers are listed in the next section. This led to 5 out of 5 detailed impact assessments being completed. The assessments required are:

- Childrens' Rights and Wellbeing
- Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty
- Health Inequalities
- Sustainability and Climate Change
- Town Centres First

In total there are 21 positive impacts as part of this activity. There are 0 negative impacts, all impacts have been mitigated. The impact on 1 groups is not known, information is provided in the detailed sections of this document.

A detailed action plan with 0 points has been provided.

This assessment has been approved by [ewan.wallace@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:ewan.wallace@aberdeenshire.gov.uk).

The remainder of this document sets out the details of all completed impact assessments.

## 2. Screening

Could your activity / proposal / policy cause an impact in one (or more) of the identified town centres?	Yes
Would this activity / proposal / policy have consequences for the health and wellbeing of the population in the affected communities?	Yes
Does the activity / proposal / policy have the potential to affect greenhouse gas emissions (CO2e) in the Council or community and / or the procurement, use or disposal of physical resources?	Yes
Does the activity / proposal / policy have the potential to affect the resilience to extreme weather events and/or a changing climate of Aberdeenshire Council or community?	No
Does the activity / proposal / policy have the potential to affect the environment, wildlife or biodiversity?	No
Does the activity / proposal / policy have an impact on people and / or groups with protected characteristics?	Yes
Is this activity / proposal / policy of strategic importance for the council?	Yes
Does this activity / proposal / policy reduce inequality of outcome?	Yes
Does this activity / proposal / policy have an impact on children / young people's rights?	Yes
Does this activity / proposal / policy have an impact on children / young people's wellbeing?	Yes

## 3. Impact Assessments

Children's Rights and Wellbeing	No Negative Impacts Identified
Climate Change and Sustainability	No Negative Impacts Identified
Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty	No Negative Impacts Identified
Health Inequalities	No Negative Impacts Identified
Town Centre's First	No Negative Impacts Identified



## 4. Childrens' Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment

### 4.1. Wellbeing Indicators

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Safe		Yes		
Healthy		Yes		
Achieving		Yes		
Nurtured		Yes		
Active		Yes		
Respected		Yes		
Responsible		Yes		
Included		Yes		

### 4.2. Rights Indicators

UNCRC Indicators upheld by this activity / proposal / policy	Article 27 - Adequate standard of living Article 31 - Leisure, play and culture
--	--

### 4.3. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
Other Evidence	Urban Transport Group publication - The Cross-Sector Benefits of Backing the Bus	For most young people, the bus is public transport and is vital for connecting them to valuable opportunities both in and out of school. The experience of independent bus travel in itself develops life skills.	The partnership should have a positive impact on Children and young People's Rights and Well-being

### 4.4. Accounting for the Views of Children and Young People

Where relevant, proposals being developed by the partnership which affect children and young people will seek to take their views into account.

### 4.5. Promoting the Wellbeing of Children and Young People

Young People have an above average reliance on public transport to access essential services, employment and higher education / training. Improved bus services will enhance such access opportunities. The partnership aims to improve bus services.

### 4.6. Upholding Children and Young People's Rights

Access to free bus services (through Young Persons Concessionary travel Scheme) indirectly supports Article 17 (adequate standard of living) and the availability of transport supports Article 21 (leisure, play and culture).

## 4.7. Overall Outcome

No Negative Impacts Identified.

There is no evidence of negative impacts.

## 5. Equalities and Fairer Scotland Duty Impact Assessment

### 5.1. Protected Groups

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Age (Younger)	Yes			
Age (Older)	Yes			
Disability	Yes			
Race	Yes			
Religion or Belief		Yes		
Sex	Yes			
Pregnancy and Maternity		Yes		
Sexual Orientation		Yes		
Gender Reassignment		Yes		
Marriage or Civil Partnership		Yes		

### 5.2. Socio-economic Groups

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Low income	Yes			
Low wealth	Yes			
Material deprivation	Yes			
Area deprivation	Yes			
Socioeconomic background	Yes			

### 5.3. Positive Impacts

Impact Area	Impact
Age (Older)	Older People have an above average reliance on public transport to access essential services. Improved bus services will enhance such access opportunities.
Age (Younger)	Young People have an above average reliance on public transport to access essential services, employment and higher education/training. Improved bus services will enhance such access opportunities.
Disability	Any improved bus service infrastructure progressed under the auspices of the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance will be designed to comply with disability legislation, in terms of the Department for Transport's 'Inclusive Mobility'
Race	Minority Groups have an above average reliance on bus services to access essential services / activities.
Sex	Women have an above average reliance on bus services to access essential facilities / activities.

Impact Area	Impact
Area deprivation	Areas of urban deprivation have a low car ownership and high reliance on bus services to access essential facilities / activities. Poor accessibility is a major contributing factor to rural deprivation
Low income	Bus services help people to find, and stay, in employment. The bus sector is also a major employer itself.
Low wealth	Bus services help people to find, and stay, in employment. The bus sector is also a major employer itself.
Material deprivation	Bus services help people to find, and stay, in employment. The bus sector is also a major employer itself.
Socioeconomic background	The bus acts as a conduit to enable people to reach their potential, particularly those most at risk of exclusion.

## 5.4. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
Other Evidence	Urban Transport Group publication - The Cross-Sector Benefits of Backing the Bus	<p>The bus acts as a conduit to enable people to reach their potential, particularly those most at risk of exclusion. The majority of jobseekers in British cities outside London do not have regular access to their own vehicle and primarily rely on the bus to access job opportunities.</p> <p>Bus services build a more prosperous society by supporting people into work and helping them to realise their potential.</p>	The partnership should have a positive impact for Equalities and poverty.

## 5.5. Engagement with affected groups

Where relevant, proposals being developed by the partnership which affect different protected categories will seek to take their views into account.

## 5.6. Ensuring engagement with protected groups

No specific proposals have been progressed by the partnership to this point that have required such engagement, however, the views of bus users are reflected in partnership discussion given that a representative of Bus Users Scotland is represented on the Bus Alliance Board

## 5.7. Evidence of engagement

As indicated above, no specific proposals have been progressed by the partnership to this point that have required such engagement. Such engagement will be undertaken when progressing definitive proposals to improve bus services e.g. on the radial corridors into Aberdeen City and in developing the vision for Aberdeen Rapid Transit (ART).

## 5.8. Overall Outcome

No Negative Impacts Identified.

There is no evidence of negative impacts.

## 5.9. Improving Relations

In promoting bus services and bus service improvements advanced by the partnership there may be the opportunity to promote good relations between various groups / areas.

## 5.10. Opportunities of Equality

Improved bus services creates the opportunity for advancing equality of opportunity through various avenues, for example:

The bus is the most commonly used form of public transport among disabled people and is vital in expanding access to employment. To ensure the financial security of this group, bus services must be affordable, accessible and acceptable to use.

Free bus travel for older people gives this group the freedom to continue contributing to the economy and to society.

## 6. Health Inequalities Impact Assessment

### 6.1. Health Behaviours

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Healthy eating		Yes		
Exercise and physical activity	Yes			
Substance use – tobacco		Yes		
Substance use – alcohol		Yes		
Substance use – drugs		Yes		
Mental health	Yes			

### 6.2. Positive Impacts

Impact Area	Impact
Exercise and physical activity	Use of bus services is acknowledged as a means of increasing exercise and physical activity given the requirement to walk to/ from bus stops.
Mental health	Provision of adequate bus services are acknowledged as providing mental health benefits by reducing social isolation / exclusion.

### 6.3. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
Other Evidence	Urban Transport Group publication - The Cross-Sector Benefits of Backing the Bus	Walking to and from the bus stop provides the chance for easy, everyday physical activity. The bus also brings other health benefits, including better air quality, improved mental wellbeing and access to healthcare facilities and health promoting activities.	The partnership should have a positive impact on Health Inequalities.

### 6.4. Overall Outcome

No Negative Impacts Identified.

There is no evidence of negative impacts.

## 7. Sustainability and Climate Change Impact Assessment

### 7.1. Emissions and Resources

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Consumption of energy	Yes			
Energy efficiency	Yes			
Energy source	Yes			
Low carbon transition	Yes			
Consumption of physical resources		Yes		
Waste and circularity		Yes		
Circular economy transition		Yes		
Economic and social transition		Yes		

### 7.2. Biodiversity and Resilience

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Quality of environment	Yes			
Quantity of environment		Yes		
Wildlife and biodiversity		Yes		
Infrastructure resilience		Yes		
Council resilience		Yes		
Community resilience		Yes		
Adaptation		Yes		

### 7.3. Positive Impacts

Impact Area	Impact
Quality of environment	The provision of improved bus services will have various positive impacts on the quality of the environment, including: through modal shift and therefore reduction in car based trips and, in turn, environmental pollution; faster bus running times through bus priority measures resulting in less PCV related vehicle emissions; and, through the introduction of low / zero emission buses reducing air pollution related to NOx and particulates.
Consumption of energy	In introducing new vehicles, the intention would be for operator partners in the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance to replace existing diesel powered vehicles with more energy efficient electric and / or hydrogen vehicles.
Energy efficiency	In introducing new vehicles, the intention would be for operator partners in the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance to replace existing diesel powered vehicles with more energy efficient vehicles.

Impact Area	Impact
Energy source	In introducing new vehicles, the intention would be for operator partners in the North east of Scotland Bus Alliance to replace existing diesel powered vehicles with electric and/or hydrogen powered vehicles.
Low carbon transition	Given the overall goal of reversing bus patronage decline, the North East of Scotland Bus Alliance partnership is aiming to improve the quality of bus service delivery, including through the introduction of high quality low/zero emission vehicles.

## 7.4. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
Other Evidence	Major Bus Group Sustainability Strategies	Both First and Stagecoach at Group level are committed to carbon reduction targets, with the replacement of the existing fleet with zero emission vehicles given as one means to achieve these targets.	Given these Group level commitment it is considered that the local subsidiary companies, First Aberdeen and Stagecoach Bluebird will be willing to enter into partnership agreements setting out enhanced vehicle standards in relation to carbon and other emissions.
Other Evidence	Urban Transport Group publication - The Cross-Sector Benefits of Backing the Bus	Improvements in vehicle technology, together with the bus's ability to cut congestion, help to protect the environment by improving air quality and mitigating climate change. Buses also offer a means to access the natural environment whilst reducing congestion around beauty spots.	The partnership should have a positive impact on Sustainability and Climate Change

## 7.5. Overall Outcome

No Negative Impacts Identified.

There is no evidence of negative impacts.



## 8. Town Centre's First Impact Assessment

### 8.1. Local Factors

Indicator	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Unknown
Town centre assets		Yes		
Footfall	Yes			
Changes to road layouts				Yes
	Will find out by: Through Bus Partnership Funding proposals, bus priority measures within town centres may be promoted, but these are still to be determined.			
Parking		Yes		
Infrastructure changes	Yes			
Aesthetics of the town centre		Yes		
Tourism	Yes			
Public safety		Yes		
Town centre business	Yes			
Cultural heritage and identity		Yes		
Social and cultural aspects		Yes		

### 8.2. Positive Impacts

Impact Area	Impact
Footfall	Improved bus services will increase the accessibility of town centres to those without access to a car and in turn increase footfall.
Infrastructure changes	Improved bus service infrastructure will be progressed under the auspices of the Bus Alliance
Town centre business	Improved bus services will increase footfall of Aberdeenshire town centres and, in turn, the revenue of local retail and other businesses
Tourism	Improved bus services will increase the accessibility of Aberdeenshire tourist destinations for those without access to a car.

### 8.3. Evidence

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
------	--------	----------	-----------

Type	Source	It says?	It Means?
Other Evidence	Urban Transport Group publication - The Cross-Sector Benefits of Backing the Bus	<p>The bus plays a key role in expanding the supply of accessible land for housing and other developments, as well as in raising the value of existing real estate. Transit orientated development helps to reduce negative impacts of new housing schemes.</p> <p>Create socially and economically stronger and more confident communities</p> <p>By cutting congestion and providing access to jobs, education and leisure, the bus builds the social and economic capacity of communities.</p>	The partnership should have a positive impact on Aberdeenshire Town Centres by providing improved access to these locations, increased footfall and therefore retail and other turnover in town centres and mitigate against the impact of out-of-town developments.

## 8.4. Overall Outcome

No Negative Impacts Identified.

There is no evidence of negative impacts.

Start-Up Assessment

Appendix 2

Partnership Working Policy - Partnership Assessment : Bus Alliance

This should be completed every two years as per the terms of the Partnership Working Policy.

This information will be presented to the relevant policy committee to inform its decision on membership of the partnership

Areas for consideration	Assessment	Comment/Proposed Action
Is the partnership a statutory partnership?	No	The Bus Alliance is a voluntary partnership however, the intention is to introduce statutory Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP).
If yes, please state the legislation in the comment box. (Please continue to go through the assessment for best practice purposes, rather than to assess whether there should be participation in the partnership).		BSIPs fall under the Transport (Scotland) Act, 2019.
The partnership has set outcomes or objectives to be achieved	Yes	
The partnership's aims and any commitment of budget fit with the council's strategic plan and priorities ( <a href="http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-plan">http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/council-and-democracy/council-plan</a> )	Yes	
If yes or partly, please specify which priorities in the comment box		Bus services help deliver the Strategic Priority "Health & Wellbeing" within the Pillar "Our People," by tackling poverty and inequalities"; Strategic Priority "Resilient Communities " within the Pillar "Our Environment", through helping to address issues of climate and sustainability; and Strategic Priority "Economy & Enterprise" within the Pillar "Our Economy" by having the right people, in the right place, doing the right thing, at the right time.
The partnership follows the Account Commission's Code on Following the Public Pound / financial regulations and agrees appropriate arrangements for allocating start-up and running costs ( <a href="http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/uploads/docs/report/2004/nr_040311_following_public_pound.pdf">http://www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/uploads/docs/report/2004/nr_040311_following_public_pound.pdf</a> )	N/A	There are no direct financial implications associated with participation in the partnership.

Start-Up Assessment

Areas for consideration	Assessment	Comment/Proposed Action
The partnership makes links to the CPP's Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priorities where relevant ( <a href="http://www.ouraberdeenshire.org.uk/our-priorities/local-outcomes-improvement-plan/">http://www.ouraberdeenshire.org.uk/our-priorities/local-outcomes-improvement-plan/</a> )	Yes	It is anticipated that each of the public sector participants, Aberdeenshire Council, Aberdeen City Council and Nestrans regional transport partnership will engage with the relevant Community Planning Partnerships as, and when, appropriate.
All other appropriate bodies have been invited to participate in this partnership	Yes	All other appropriate bodies have been invited to participate in this partnership.
The partnership ensures equality of opportunity for all and complies with statutory duties (equalities, socio-economic, town centres first principle) as required	Yes	The partnership aims to improved bus services. Several protected groups form the majority bus users, including, older people, young persons, disabled persons and women, and therefore any enhancement to provision will improve equality of opportunity. Each partner organisation will be responsible for complying with its statutory duties in this respect.
The partnership has a document such as an agreement, remit or memorandum of association to define its role, powers and how it carries out its business	Yes	The Partnership Agreement includes a 'Terms of Reference' detailing the governance arrangements.
The partnership makes a formal annual report that includes annual accounts and performance to its members and other bodies if necessary	No	There is no requirement for the partnership to compile and submit a statement of annual accounts.
Appropriate status and voting rights are accorded to the council in the partnership	Yes	It is intended all decisions will be taken by consensus. However, in the case of dispute or inability to reach consensus, business will be determined by vote. Each representative on the Partnership (Bus Alliance) Board is conferred with one vote, including the Council's representative.

Start-Up Assessment

Areas for consideration	Assessment	Comment/Proposed Action
Members of the partnership's top-level decision-making group can be recalled by their nominating bodies	Yes	There is no set maximum term of appointment, however, the appointment by partners of their Board representatives remains wholly at the discretion of the respective participating organisations.
The risks faced by the partnership are shared between partners	Yes	Given the voluntary and overarching nature of the partnership it is considered that only reputational risk is involved, which would be shared across all participants. Any financial risks will be confined to projects/initiatives developed under the Bus Alliance. These projects/initiatives will be subject to further partnership and other agreements, as appropriate, which will require to be subject to further Committee reports prior to any commitment to Council involvement.
Routine sharing of personal data will take place within the partnership	No	
If yes or partly, please consider if a Data Privacy Impact Assessment, an Information Sharing Agreement or a Privacy Notice is required. All guidance and templates can be found at this link <a href="https://aberdeenshire.sharepoint.com/sites/Arcadia/services/Pages/Business%20Services/ICT/Information%20Management%20and%20Record%20Management/Data%20Protection/Data%20Protection.aspx">https://aberdeenshire.sharepoint.com/sites/Arcadia/services/Pages/Business%20Services/ICT/Information%20Management%20and%20Record%20Management/Data%20Protection/Data%20Protection.aspx</a>		
The partnership has a complaints process or agrees to adopt the complaints process of a member organisation	Yes	Any complaint regarding an individual participant would require to be dealt with under the respective organisation's complaints procedure. Any complaint regarding the partnership <i>per se</i> would be considered by Nestrans who will provide secretarial support.

Start-Up Assessment

Areas for consideration	Assessment	Comment/Proposed Action
Meetings of the partnership's top-level decision-making group are open to the public	No	Given the commercially sensitive nature of some of the issues that are discussed, members of the Bus Alliance Board are required to sign and abide by confidentiality and disclosure provisions set out in the partnership Terms of Reference.
The public is entitled to see reports considered by the partnership's top-level decision-making group	Partly	Partnership reports and other documentation are assigned an information sharing level. GREEN documentation may be published in the public arena. AMBER documentation of commercial interest may only be made public if permission is granted and RED documentation/information will remain non-disclosable being restricted to the participants
Minutes of the partnership's meetings are made publicly available	Yes	The minutes of the Bus Alliance Board are reported to the Nestrans Board and therefore in the public domain.
The partnership's top-level decision-making group has a quorum for meetings	No	It is intended all decisions will be taken by consensus. Only in cases of dispute or inability to reach consensus business will decisions be determined by vote. Should the Council representative be unavailable to attend any Board meeting a substitute may attend on their behalf, negating the need for any set quorum.
Members of the partnership's top-level decision-making group are appointed for a limited period of time	No	There is no set maximum term of appointment, however, the appointment by partners of their Board representatives remains wholly at the discretion of the respective participating organisations.
There are agreed arrangements for dissolving the partnership	No	As the partnership is purely voluntary no specific arrangements for dissolving the partnership are required.

Start-Up Assessment

Areas for consideration	Assessment	Comment/Proposed Action
There are clear arrangements for the council to exit the partnership	No	As the partnership is purely voluntary, the Council may exit the partnership at any time, subject to potential reputational risk.
There is a procedure for ensuring members who declare conflicts of interest take no part in decision	N/A	Given the nature and objectives of the partnership it was not considered necessary to incorporate a defined procedure to ensure Board representatives declare any conflicts of
The partnership recognises the obligations placed on Elected Members due to the Code of Conduct and has a procedure for ensuring members who declare conflicts of interest take no part in decision.	N/A	The Council's Bus Alliance Board representative is the Head of Environment & Sustainability.

Start-Up Assessment

Cost / Benefit Analysis	Response
Please detail the staffing and financial implications of running the partnership, including those on other council services and partners	Staffing costs are met from existing staff resource with the Secretariat function provided by Nestrans. The full financial implications of participation will only become clear when individual projects/BSIPs under the overarching Bus Alliance are pursued and these will be reported to the appropriate Council Committee(s) prior to commitment.
Please state the source of any funding received by the partnership	Funding for individual partnership projects is and will be provided by individual partners, with funding proportionate to the anticipated outcome benefits to individual partners. Funding to progress the principal project being pursued by the Bus Alliance has been secured from the Bus Partnership Fund.
Please describe the benefits of council participating in the partnership	The overall aim of the partnership is to arrest bus patronage decline, and subsequently increase usage, through the provision of more attractive and higher quality bus services. Improved bus services can deliver significant cross-sector benefits, including: better access to health care facilities and employment opportunities resulting in social and health care benefits; modal shift reducing carbon and other vehicle emissions with environmental and public health benefits; and, assist in the enhancing the economic viability of town and city centres, through, for example, the provision of access to shopping facilities in these locations.
The partnership is sustainable and is the best way of achieving its aims and outcomes	Under current and emerging legislation and in view of current and likely future funding regimes, partnership working with the private bus industry is considered the most effective way of improving bus services, with consequential social, environmental and economic benefits. The partnership also provides an effective basis for joint-working with Aberdeen City on matters relating to regional/cross-boundary bus service provision, and approach which is necessary if the benefits are to be maximised. All parties are currently fully committed to the success of the Bus Alliance, with participation enabling funding to be achieved through the Scottish Government's Bus Partnership Fund.



Appendix 3

**Partnership Working Procedure - Risk Assessment : Bus Alliance**

This should be completed every two years as per the terms of the Partnership Working Policy.

This helps determine if the partnership presents a "significant" risk to the Council and what steps require to be taken if that is the case.

Partnership Name:	Completed by:	Date:
North East of Scotland Bus Alliance	Richard P McKenzie	06-Apr-22

All partnerships must be recorded in the Register of Partnerships on Arcadia

This table assesses whether your partnership should be recorded as a **significant** partnership requiring a Risk Register (from the Risk Management Team).

Please enter the score in the last column for the statement which most closely represents your partnership.

Impact No.	Description	Minor (Score 1)	Important (Score 2)	Significant (Score 3)	Major (Score 4)	Score
1	<b>The Council contributes to the partnership by direct funding and/or indirectly through staff resources, work done etc.)</b>	< £10K per annum	£10K to < £50 k per annum	£50K to < £100k per annum	> £100k per annum	4
2	<b>The partnership's success is critical to the achievement of one or more of the Council's Strategic Priorities.</b>	Not directly linked to a strategic priority (this needs to be flagged up to the policy committee in this case)	Linked to a strategic priority	Significant contributor to success of a strategic priority	Essential to the achievement of a strategic priority	3
3	<b>Failure of the partnership would have an impact on the Council's reputation.</b>	Threat of adverse comment in local press or the equivalent that Corporate Communications consider to be of material concern to the Council.	Actual adverse comment in local press or the equivalent that Corporate Communications consider to be of material concern to the Council.	Individual press reports in national media that Corporate Communications consider being of material concern to the Council.	Concerted, widespread or recurrent critical coverage of the Council or for a specific event in the media	3
4	<b>The extent to which partnership expenditure is controlled by the Council.</b>	The Council has full control over expenditure decisions.	The Council has veto on expenditure decisions.	The Council is a party to expenditure decisions.	The Council has no control over expenditure.	2

Impact No.	Description	Minor (Score 1)	Important (Score 2)	Significant (Score 3)	Major (Score 4)	Score
5	<b>The partnership takes decisions on behalf of or which are binding on the Council.</b>	The Partnership does not take decisions on behalf of the Council	The Partnership does not take decisions on behalf of the Council but representatives with decision-making authority attend the partnership and consider and influence its recommendations.	The Partnership does not take decisions on behalf of the Council but representatives with decision-making authority attend the partnership and agree to be bound by its decisions.	The partnership has decision-making responsibilities directly delegated to it from the Council.	2
6	<b>The Council has set up the partnership in order to receive additional funding and/or meet Statutory or Regulatory requirement.</b>	Not required by law or to receive funding.	Indirect or limited links to successful achievement of funding.	Direct links to successful achievement of funding.	The Council is required to participate in this partnership by law or to receive specific funding.	4

Total Score	18
Maximum Possible Score	24
Impact %	75.00%
Evaluation	<b>Significant</b>