

Record of Delegated Executive Decision(s)

1. Subject of decision

Enhanced Bus Partnership

2. Name and Title of Decision Maker

Cllr Carl Johnson, Deputy Mayor

3. Details of any Conflict of Interest and any Dispensation granted in respect of such Interest

None

4. Executive summary

Cabinet in September 2021 agreed fully to support and endorse the establishment of an Enhanced Partnership (EP) for bus services in the North East. Through its National Bus Strategy, the Government has stipulated that an EP must be in place by April 2022 in order for the region to receive any further Government funding for bus services.

In November 2021, Cabinet noted that the required next steps in the EP process involved developing an EP plan and one or more EP schemes and the carrying out of associated engagement and consultation on those documents. Cabinet authorised the Deputy Mayor, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and appropriate Directors as set out in section 1.2, to approve the draft EP plan and scheme for consultation and subsequently amend the plan and scheme if necessary following consultation. Cabinet also authorised the Director of Law and Governance, in consultation with the Deputy Mayor, the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, the Director of Regeneration and Economic Development, the Director of Environment, Housing and Leisure and the Director of Resources, to take the necessary steps for the Authority to enter into the EP.

The North East Joint Transport Committee (JTC) on 20 December 2021 approved the proposed EP plan and scheme, and agreed to carry out further external engagement, which is currently taking place, and formal consultation will commence in January 2022.

While the JTC discharges functions on behalf of the local transport authorities, namely, the North East Combined Authority and the North of Tyne Combined Authority, aspects of the EP plan and scheme will relate to powers held by the Authority, as the highway authority for the borough.

Recognising the positive value of having an EP in place and allowing for the timescales necessary to meet Government deadlines, the Deputy Mayor, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and appropriate Directors as set out in section 1.2, is invited to agree the draft Enhanced Partnership's plan and scheme insofar as they relate to the Authority's highway authority functions undergoing public consultation in accordance with the Transport Act 2000.

5. Alternative Options considered

Option 1 – To approve the recommendations as set out in paragraph 1.2.

Option 2 – Not to approve the recommendations as set out in paragraph 1.2.

6. Decision(s)

The Deputy Mayor has, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources, the Director of Regeneration and Economic Development, the Director of Environment, Housing and Leisure, the Director of Law and Governance and the Director of Resources, agreed to the draft Enhanced Partnership's plan and scheme attached at Appendix 1 of the report being consulted on in accordance with the Transport Act 2000.

7. Reasons for the Decision(s)

To support the further development of an Enhanced Partnership, which represents an opportunity to deliver aspects of the Authority's and the region's transport objectives and to secure ongoing Government funding for bus services.

8. Date Decision Made

6 January 2022

9. Is this decision subject to call-in and if so expiry date of call-in period

Yes, the call-in period expires at 5pm on the 13 January 2022

10. Date of Publication

6 January 2022

11. Implementation Date (if decision not called in)

After 5pm on 13 January 2022