

Attendees:

1. **Tatiana Cullingford** - Local Bus Network Engagement and Community Lead
2. **Cllr Peter Harris** - Weeley & Tendring District, representing Tendring Village Parish
3. **Ellie Beaver** - Local Bus transport Officer
4. **Andrew Scullion** - Passenger transport Infrastructure Manager
5. **Kevin Millar** - Weeley Parish Council
6. **Debbie Hill** - Harwich Connexions Transport - Tendring Community Transport
7. **Miles Fajembola** - Enhanced Partnership Lead
8. **Penny Gagné** - Hollands on Sea residents association.
9. **Cllr Peter Harry** - Great Bentley Parish Council

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Progress on (BSIP) and Enhanced Bus Partnership (Eps)
3. Overview from Local Bus team - (ECC Contracted services)
4. Passenger Travel Information update - (TravelEssex.co.uk)
5. Bus shelter project update
6. Questions raised prior to the meeting.
7. £2 single fare cap update

1. Welcome and Introductions

All attendees made introductions.

2. Progress on (BSIP) and Enhanced Bus Partnership (Eps)

Government introduced its National Bus Strategy (NBS) Bus Back Better in March 2021. Essex entered a County wide Enhanced Partnerships (EP) covering the period 2022-2027. Bus Service Improvement Plans (BSIP) are a key part of the strategy set by Bus Back Better. The DfT have required ECC to submit a revised BSIP, setting its bus priorities to 2030. ECC are in the process of revising it and intend to submit it to the DfT over the summer. As the current BSIP was expected to last to 2027, no significant changes in policy or approach are expected.

The Essex Countywide EP has met all the shorter-term measures set out in it and continue to manage the ongoing targets. Document can be found on the link below:

<https://www.essexhighways.org/uploads/downloads/temp/enhanced%20plan%20and%20scheme.pdf>

ECC and its operator partners intend to review the EP over the summer and autumn with the aim of refreshing some elements. In the meantime, ECC will be pressing ahead with its first district level partnership in Tendring. Up to £2m of BSIP+ revenue funding has been allocated to help improve bus services in the area and ECC has begun discussion with Tendring's bus operators on potential measures that could be adopted. There will be a formal consultation process, expected later in the year. ECC will also explore ways of rolling out the creation of EPs for the remaining Essex District level Authorities more rapidly.

3. Local Bus Update

Local Bus Transport Officer provides an update on bus services in the Braintree area. Information about service changes in Braintree Area below:

Service number	Origin	Destination	Days of operation	Current operator	Summary of Changes
22 (Previously 2)	Harwich	Harwich	Monday to Saturday	Panther Travel	Change of operator to Hedingham & Chambers. Service Renumbered as 22
2 / 2A	Clacton	Mistley	Monday to Saturday	Hedingham & Chambers	No Change
4 / 136A (Previously 4)	Jaywick/ Clacton	Great Clacton / Holland on Sea	Monday to Saturday Evenings	Hedingham & Chambers	Revised timetable service number renumbered from just 4 to become 4/136A
6A / 6B	Clacton	Point Clear	Monday to Saturday Evenings	Hedingham & Chambers	No Change
9	Walton on the Naze	Great Holland	Monday to Friday Only	Hedingham & Chambers	No Change
74B	Clacton	Colchester	Monday to Saturday Evenings	First Essex Buses Ltd	Change of operator to Hedingham & Chambers
76	Clacton	Colchester	Sunday & Public Holidays	First Essex Buses Ltd	Change of to Hedingham & Chambers
77 / 77A	St Osyth Beach	Colchester	Monday to Friday Only	Hedingham & Chambers	No Change
80 / 80A / 81 / 81A	Colchester	Boxted / Manningtree	Monday to Saturday	First Essex Buses Ltd	Change of operator to Hedingham & Chambers
97A / 98A	Clacton on Sea	Walton on the Naze	Monday to Saturday Evenings	Hedingham & Chambers	No Change
97 / 98	Clacton on Sea	Holland on Sea	Monday to Saturday Evenings	Hedingham & Chambers	No Change
C3 (101)	Point Clear	Brightlingsea	Schooldays	Hedingham & Chambers	Change of operator to Stephenson's of Essex. Service renumbered C3
102	Colchester	Harwich	Sunday & Public Holidays	First Essex Buses Ltd	No Change
102	Harwich	Colchester	Monday to Saturday Evenings	First Essex Buses Ltd	No Change
105 / 107	Walton on the Naze	Colchester	Monday to Saturday	Hedingham & Chambers	No Change
115	Weeley	Thorpe le Soken	Schooldays	Hedingham & Chambers	No Change
118	Parkeston	Ramsey	Schooldays	Panther Travel	Change of operator to Hedingham & Chambers
99	Clacton	Walton on the Naze	Monday to Saturday Evenings	Hedingham & Chambers	Due to the outcome of the Local Bus Consultation 2023 this service is being withdrawn

Full list of changes is available on the Travel Essex website. https://travelessex-production-bucket.s3.eu-west-2.amazonaws.com/cms-assets/buspassengernewspdfs/bus_passenger_news_-28-july-2024.pdf

4. Travel Information Update :

Travel Information Manager presented the new travelessex.co.uk website which consolidates bus information that was previously spread across multiple platforms. The site includes details on bus schedules, blog, latest updates, transport providers, Digi-Go, DaRT, timetables and much more. The site allows users to view open consultations and the outcomes of previous ones. It includes strategy documents and directories of transport providers.

Key functionalities include:

- **Discover Buses:** Find local bus stops and services, with the ability to favourite stops.
- **Plan a journey:** Essential for Braintree and integrates with Digigo booking. Plan a journey using a starting and destination point anywhere in Essex, or from your current location. Select departure or arrival times, select route type, whether that is one with fewest transfer, quickest journey or one with the least amount of walking. Choose how you want to travel, do you want to take the bus, train, bike? See suggested routes and their predicted journey time.
- **Live Bus Map:** Real-time tracking of buses, utilising data from the Bus Open Data Service (BODS). See bus routes operating on an Essex map using their live vehicle tracking, and their direction of travel. Clicking on a bus will take you to the route page where you will see the route and timetable.
- **Bus Route Information:** Tony demonstrated the bus route feature using the Braintree bus interchange example, showing how users can see routes, stops, and live tracking information.

For any suggestions and improvements that you may have regarding the TravelEssex website, please email tony.brown@essex.gov.uk

5. New Bus Shelter Contract

Infrastructure Senior Development Officer presents the new bus shelter contract with Clear Channel. The contract aims to standardise and future-proof bus infrastructure, replacing older, fragmented systems.

- The new shelters will have features like seating, motion sensor lighting, and a space for real-time screens to be integrated into the structure.
- Parishes and town councils can request new or replacement shelters through the Local Highways Panel (LHP) process. <https://www.essexhighways.org/lhp-request-member> Please note: All requests will need the support of a County Member on the LHP
- The contract includes a £3 million investment in the first year to install over 200 new shelters across the county.
- An interactive map on the Traveller Essex website shows all shelters owned by Essex County Council and provides details for reporting issues. <https://www.travelessex.co.uk/about-timetables-maps/essex-bus-shelters> The information interactive map includes: All shelters withing the contract, Ability to search by address, planned works (New/replacements shelter displayed by location in 2-months blocks on when they are expected to occur.

Bus Shelter Maintenance and Ownership:

- Parish councils can purchase bus shelters via the Local Highways Panel (LHP) process. Ownership and maintenance fall on the purchasing council.
- There is no straightforward mechanism for transferring maintenance responsibilities from parish councils to Essex County Council (ECC), although some parishes may choose to retain and manage their shelters.

For all enquiries and questions relating the Bus shelters, please email the infrastructure team directly: iptu.infrastructure@essex.gov.uk

Questions and suggestions raised:

Q1: Cllr Peter Harry asked: Is this scheme going to benefit or impact parish councils? Are we still expected to purchase our own shelters through the local highways panel? What sort of funding

are we talking about to buy a bus shelter that we then own? **A:** It is difficult to answer because there are so many different types of bus shelters, sizes, etc. I would recommend putting it through, and we can validate it, design it, and let you know the costs involved. Also, other revenues like the local highways panel may choose to fund it themselves. For further details please email infrastructure team: iptu.infrastructure@essex.gov.uk

Q2: Cllr Peter Harry asked: Are there going to be any second-hand shelters available?

A: Potentially, yes. The challenge is knowing the condition of the shelter once it is removed from the ground. Often, the foundations or footings might not be in good condition. However, the plan is to reuse shelters wherever possible, along with upgrading and refreshing existing ones.

6. Questions raised prior to the meeting:

Q1: Cllr Peter Harris asked: Is it possible to stop buses from using Crow Lane in Tendring Village / Weeley and reroute them via Thorpe? This is due to the unsuitability of the road, accidents, near misses and damage to road verges caused daily. **A:** Local bus team will look into any suggestions proposed, an impact assessment will need to be conducted, and that changes would not be immediate. We need details of the new route and the reason of this proposal to re-routing. We will reach out to Cllr Harris to get more details, any future suggestions to change to services details can be submitted to passenger.transport@essex.gov.uk

7. Single Fare Cap Scheme

The £2 single fare cap scheme has been extended to December 31, 2024, and applies to several services including Digigo. This initiative aims to make travel more affordable.

For full list of Transport provider who are part of the scheme, please click on the list below: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/2-bus-fare-cap#east-of-england>

Action Points:

1. Parish, Town, and District councils to promote the travelessex.co.uk website to residents.
2. Parish, Town, and District councils to promote £2 flat fare scheme
3. ECC to follow up on questions not answered.
4. ECC to book next transport meeting and send meeting dates late September
5. Parish, Town, and District Councils - To complete feedback/Suggestions form for Transport meetings - please click the link <https://forms.office.com/e/b1kEtpZK7k>

Future Meetings and Community Interaction:

Regular transport meetings will be held every six months to address any questions and provide updates.

ECC plans to increase community outreach and engagement, ensuring that the community is well-informed and involved in helping us promote services in your area. Please reach out to passenger.transport@essex.gov.uk if you wish to work with network engagement team in sharing awareness of service provision in your area as well as work with us collaboratively in increasing patronage on your local bus services.