

Appendix 4: Letter from the DfT on 4th May on East Sussex County Council's Indicative funding allocation



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4 April 2022

Transport Director
East Sussex County Council

[by email]

Dear Transport Director,

BSIP: Indicative funding allocation for East Sussex County Council

Thank you for your recent engagement with us on your Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP). We appreciate the time and effort you and your local bus operators have put into development of your plans.

We are pleased to offer you an indicative funding allocation of up to **£41,415,025 (of which £22,315,000 capital and £19,100,025 revenue)** to commence delivery of your BSIP. This is total funding from 2022/23 to 2024/25.

This letter does not constitute a formal or binding grant offer. Funding confirmation will be conditional on your submission and implementation of a transformational Enhanced Partnership (EP) which includes firmer and more detailed commitments, from the Local Transport Authority (and any other relevant local authorities) and local bus operators, to deliver a package of prioritised and ambitious improvements to bus services, in line with:

- i. your BSIP;
- ii. the Department's previous feedback on it and commitments made in and after clarification emails; and
- iii. the guidance provided with this email, such as the prioritisation of bus priority schemes (where relevant) and high profile and impactful interventions that reduce and simplify fares.

Whilst we appreciate that it has taken some time to provide this indicative funding allocation, Ministers remain keen to progress quickly with implementing BSIPs. They wish to ensure that, if at all possible, that funding is confirmed and EPs are in place in sufficient time to inform final decisions on service levels once recovery funding ends from October. Our planned next steps are:

- a) By **Monday 2 May** please can you complete the summary table at Annex 4, setting out how you intend to use this funding allocation - showing your prioritised interventions, delivery timelines and costs in a standard format and

with as much detail as possible of how it will be reflected in your EP. Ultimately, we will expect final summary tables to be published alongside your EP. We recognise that it may be challenging for some authorities to secure formal agreement to this update give timescales and forthcoming elections. Its purpose is to provide us with an early sense check of how your EP is developing and allow us to support you in meeting our criteria to receive finalised funding allocations. We will need to receive an update from all LTAs, which we will aim to discuss with you during May and provide further feedback. Please indicate if your update does not have formal or political approval, which we will recognise in our engagement with you. This update supersedes our earlier request for a draft Enhanced Partnership (or variation) by the end of April.

- b) As soon as possible, and **by the end of June**, please provide:
- an updated summary table, incorporating the feedback we are aiming to provide in May;
 - a draft EP (or variation to an existing EP) which shows how relevant aspects of the BSIP will be implemented. This does not need to have completed the statutory process for operator objections but should be accompanied by letters of support from sufficient operators to demonstrate that it is likely to be supported at that stage;
 - a separate document which sets out how any commitments which would not be implemented through or included in detail in an EP (such as the tendering of additional services or new DRT schemes) have been selected and will be delivered - with clear outcomes, outputs, milestones and costs; and
 - confirmation from your section 151 officer that they consider that the funding represents value for money (vfm) and that they will continue to monitor this and comply with our vfm reporting and approval requirements.
- c) We will review your draft EP and either provide further feedback, to be incorporated before we can provide funding, on it or agree that it meets our expectations and the criteria set out above, and confirm your funding allocations. If further feedback is provided you will have an opportunity to strengthen your EP before any amendment or withdrawal of your funding allocation.
- d) If and when funding has been confirmed, you should proceed to make your EP (or variation).

The following annexes set out more detail about the next steps and our requirements:

- **Annex 1** sets out detail of what the Department expects of Enhanced Partnerships, and by when, in order to confirm and release funding.

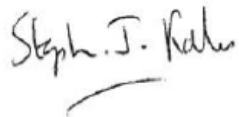
- **Annex 2** provides guidance on the Department's investment priorities and exclusions. We recognise that you may face difficult choices on how to prioritise funding within the indicative allocation. In particular, this annex sets out that we expect the vast majority of your allocation to be spent on bus priority, ambitious and eye-catching initiatives to reduce and simplify fares, and increased service frequencies and new or expanded routes.
- **Annex 3** summarises the basis on which grant funding will be provided, including our expectations on our value for money, branding, and the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- **Annex 4** contains the summary table to be completed.

We will finalise funding profiles with you before funding is confirmed. As far as possible, please shape your plans around the broad national funding shown in the table at Annex 4.

Do not hesitate to contact us with any queries by emailing BSIP@df.gov.uk.

We look forward to working with you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephen J. Fidler". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Stephen Fidler

