

# **Medway Bus Punctuality Improvement Partnership**

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The Punctuality Improvement Partnership (PIP) is a joint venture between Medway Council and;
  - Arriva Kent & Surrey
  - ASD Coaches
  - Chalkwell Coach Hire
  - Nu-Venture Coaches
- 1.2 The aim of the PIP is to monitor, maintain and improve bus punctuality and reliability in Medway.
- 1.3 Previous partnership working combined with significant investment has contributed to substantially increased bus patronage over the past few years. In 2012/13, 9.3M passenger journeys were made by bus in Medway.
- 1.4 However, more investment is needed to improve bus services and increase patronage. Research has shown that both potential and current bus passengers' concerns relate to the punctuality and reliability of services. Reasons for poor punctuality may lie with either the operator, Local Authority or with other organisations such as utility companies, undertaking highway works. Consequently it is important to have a collaborative mechanism whereby performance can be monitored, problem areas can be identified, issues communicated and resolutions reached.

## **2.0 Process**

- 2.1 Following the PIP launch, quarterly meetings will take place between Medway Council officers and representatives of the bus operators along with other third parties as required.
- 2.2 Operators will provide Medway Council with punctuality data for monitoring on a monthly basis. In month one, all data will be sent as recorded by the operator. Following this, all operators will be asked to adhere to a structured format which will be developed for submitting this data.
- 2.3 This punctuality data will be used to identify bus routes and locations with persistent issues. These routes and locations can then be investigated in order to identify possible mitigation and improvements and will also allow a headline punctuality score to be developed for Medway. This cumulative score will be published whilst any data that can be used to identify individual operators must be kept in strictest confidence in line with the Data Sharing Agreement (Appendix A).

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- 2.4 Medway Council currently works with local bus operators to improve and promote local bus services through a number of mechanisms.
- 2.5 The parties recognise the overriding need for reliability and good time keeping data under the provisions of the Data Sharing Agreement appended to this document.
- 2.6 The parties also recognise that some parts of Medway suffer from adverse traffic conditions and that this can act as a barrier to the delivery of reliable bus services.
- 2.7 The parties to this Agreement believe improved punctuality is achievable through joint working and commit to working together to deliver it.

### **3.0 Methodology**

- 3.1 To achieve these shared objectives the parties commit to the following courses of action;
  - to form a PIP consisting of Medway Council, Arriva Kent & Surrey, ASD Coaches, Chalkwell Coach Hire and Nu-Venture Coaches
  - to agree to the sharing of comprehensive bus service timekeeping data under the provisions of the Data Sharing Agreement appended to this document
  - to develop a robust system for monitoring punctuality levels, through direct monitoring and reports from the Real Time Information (RTI) system
  - to develop agreed punctuality targets by location or corridor
  - where bus service punctuality issues are identified route audits will be completed assessing the impact of the following factors; roadworks, pinch points, traffic signals, priority measures, congestion hotspots, parked vehicles, etc.
- 3.2 To agree priorities for analysis and action based on the observed scale of problems, numbers of bus users affected and the perceived cause(s).

### **4.0 Actions**

- 4.1 Actions by the bus operators could include some or all of the following;
  - provision of extra resources where Medway Council has made improvements to the network to benefit reliability
  - increased monitoring of services
  - route alterations
  - improved ticketing systems

- operational effectiveness
- staff training

4.2 Actions by Medway Council could include;

- measures to alleviate congestion hotspots
- increased enforcement of parking restrictions
- additional waiting restrictions and bus stop clearways
- bus priority measures
- improved signal control
- continued expansion of RTI
- notification and management of street works that are likely to have a significant impact upon bus services
- management and operation of Chatham Bus Station

4.3 All parties will work together with the following external agencies;

- Kent County Council
- Department for Transport
- Highways Agency
- Developers
- South Eastern Railway
- Medway NHS Trust

## **Partnership Agreement**

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Medway Council Portfolio Holder for Highways and Waste Services

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### **Hardip Dosanjh**

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### **Andrew Bates**

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