

Draft BSIP Stakeholder Consultation response

A public consultation was undertaken between 13 August – 13 September 2021. This was publicised via social media, bus stop Real Time information screens, and via the Council website, www.medway.gov.uk/bsip.

The following stakeholder groups were contacted and advised about Medway's BSIP.

- Medway's three constituency Members of Parliament
- All Medway's 55 local councillors
- Medway's Parish Councils
- Transport Focus
- St Mary's Island Residents Association
- New Road PACT
- Confederation Passenger Transport
- Bus Users UK
- Medway Youth Parliament
- Students Union – Universities at Medway
- Medway Hospital
- Kent & Medway Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- Town Centre Manager
- Tourism
- Gillingham Business Park
- CM Trust
- Dockside Outlet Centre
- Hempstead Valley
- Pentagon Centre
- South Eastern Railway Partnership Manager
- KAB
- Medway Parents & Carers forum
- Age UK Medway
- Alzheimer's Society
- Kent & Medway Voice
- Medway Pensioners Forum
- Medway Deaf Club
- Centre for Independent Living Kent
- Medway Ethnic Minority Forum
- Early Years, Medway Council
- Medway Afro Caribbean Association
- Medway PCT
- NHS Medway Clinical Commissioning Group
- Chatham Historic Dockyard
- Network Rail
- Local Access Forum
- NHS Medway CCG
- Rochester Cathedral
- Thames Gateway Kent Partnership

- Kent & Medway Economic Board
- NHS Medway Clinical Commissioning Group
- Connexions Kent and Medway
- RNID South East and Anglia
- MHS Homes Group
- Medway Tourism Association Members
- Local business via town centre managers.

In addition, a meeting with local Department for Work & Pensions, JCP Local Partnership Manager was set up, with quarterly meetings scheduled going forward.

On 8 September 2021, a Medway Youth Parliament City Hall event was held, where over 100 local young people and their parents/carers attended, and an exercise was undertaken to rank priorities and scope for further ideas.

This table below details the responses received:

Respondent	Comments/Points raised
Cllr Joanne Howcroft-Scott	<p>For the environment it would be better if we could encourage more people to buses is the key to this I believe: We need to Get more younger people to use the bus by having parity with Kent and setting up a one-off payment scheme for ALL children and young people in education to aged 19.</p> <p>Discount tickets for off peak times will encourage more use of buses.</p> <p>Medway deserves greener transport maybe investment in trams.</p> <p>My constituents want safe and speedy eco-friendly bus journeys.</p> <p>A reliable service and communication when things are going wrong.</p> <p>Accessible bus stops which ease getting on and getting off for our senior citizens, our parents with young children and people with disabilities.</p>
Nina Peak Partnership Manager, South Eastern Railway Partnership	<p>We support all methods of transport that reduce car travel and encourage people to use sustainable methods of transport to travel</p> <p>Please can we ask that bus timetables align with train timetables where possible to encourage end to end journey planning. Bus stops and bus shelters are as close to stations as possible with clear real time bus information.</p>
Local resident	<p>Although Medway Council has indicated that it will have an Enhanced Partnership with our local bus companies, I am disappointed that the Council has not taken up the opportunity</p>

	<p>under new powers, granted by the government, to take control of our local bus services. Heavy vehicle traffic and increasing car use is a significant problem in the Medway Towns and use of public transport needs to be encouraged. However, to persuade people to abandon their cars and take a bus there will have to be significant improvements to the current service.</p> <p>This brings me to my second comment. Buses need to run frequently and at times when they are needed. I concede that most daytime services in the area are adequate, but provision in the evening and at the weekend is not. There needs to be a significant improvement in the frequency of buses during these periods if people are to be weaned off car use and on to public transport. As a non-driver I have used buses in the Medway Towns for many years and have been disappointed in the reduction in evening and weekend services over that time. I hope this is something that Medway Council will be pursuing with the bus companies.</p>
Local resident	<p>The following comments relate mainly to Arriva services as I don't use the local services that often but when I have done, there have not been any problems worth mentioning.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor route number displays on many buses; some of them are so feint as to be unreadable especially in sunny conditions. 2. On-bus route information either non-existent or incorrect, route 101 is probably one of the main culprits. 3. Lack of up-to-date timetable information both at bus stops and the bus station; it is also difficult to find any at the bus station to speak to if I have a problem. 4. Buses are dirty, both inside and out. Even allowing for the problems relating to Covid-19 I think they could be better presented. 5. Many buses running around all day every day with "Not in Service" suggests poor route planning. 6. Many drivers are very scruffy, even those that wear uniforms. 7. Lack of a bus service information point in Waterfront Bus Station. Why was the existing information point closed? <p>As a pensioner that no longer drives a car I rely on buses a lot and given the area that I live in I have no choice but to use Arriva buses; whilst I realise that a lot of these issues may not relate directly to the BSIP it does mean that travelling by bus is more of a nuisance than a pleasure.</p>
Becky Waller, DWP JCP Partnership Manager	<p>Areas identified where job seekers are having difficulty accessing employment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medway Valley Park • Hoo peninsula/ London Medway Commercial Park • Cliffe/Cliffe Woods

<p>Medway Youth Parliament City Hall event</p>	<p>70 responses received from young people at event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14% - more buses and on time • 13%- Linking well with trains and other services • 34%- Lower and simpler fares • 12%- Better buses with screens, USB and low emissions • 20%- Safer bus stops and bus station • 6%- Better information <p>Ideas mentioned as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better info for public and respecting disabled passengers • More sustainable • Return fares before 9am • Better bus shelters with wi-fi • Free bus routes • Electric buses • Free travel for secondary school students • Thought out bus routes • Low emission buses • Green bus shelters • More services down Churchill Avenue • School buses for children only not random adults • Better app • Direct routes to children’s activities • More room for pushchairs and disabled
<p>David Beer, Senior Manager, Transport Focus</p>	<p>We believe that your priorities (from the measures listed in the summary) should be more frequent and reliable services and improvements to fares and ticketing, which broadly captures our own top four passenger ‘wants’ (as covered in the attached document for reference). As for the full draft BSIP document we have the following feedback.</p> <p>In overall terms the document is detailed, well presented and easy to read. You provide a lot of contextual/background information to set the scene and outline the constraints within which you will be working (something we have suggested). Much of what is presented regarding bus services is about what is currently in place and in many cases the risks (post-Covid and subject to funding) that they may be reduced, rather than enhanced. The section 4.2 “What does success look like” provides many encouraging ambitions, but it is less clear about how and when these might be delivered (if at all).</p> <p>We noted that the public consultation on the Local Transport Plan provided a similar list of concerns as identified in our list of ‘what passengers want’. It will be interesting to see what the Reported targets are set as, given that this information is currently missing for the critical topics of journey time and reliability. Our thoughts on the proposal for measuring journey time on three or four corridors between selected timing points is to be careful that this reflects passenger experiences more widely, so that it has</p>

credibility. A minor point on the reference to the Transport Focus passenger satisfaction survey – one key reason for the difference in scores is that our survey focusses on an individual journey, rather than on general satisfaction with bus services.

In section 2.13 on barriers to bus use and growth, you draw upon the results of the National Highways and Transport (NHT) Survey, but we are not sure of the logic of focusing on the biggest gaps (compared to the national figures), rather than, for example, the lowest scores, although we expect some of these are also the lowest scores.

In terms of meeting the needs of passengers (as identified through our own research), there were several important areas covered within your BSIP, including buses running more often, buses running on time/faster journey times and better value for money. There was less evidence of measures to take buses to more places (other than the Hoo peninsular), although simplifying the network may help with the creation of a stable network. Much of what is mentioned on the topics of tackling anti-social behaviour (via CCTV) and the quality of information at bus stops is about retaining or replacing what is already in place, rather than expanding it, so passengers are not going to see more of this. While we welcome the measures discussed for improving accessibility at bus stops (e.g. kerb access and stop design), other aspects related to the onboard situation were limited to the provision of onboard audio-visual next stop information (although again, this is welcome). We wonder whether other aspects around the onboard experience (e.g. space for wheelchairs/buggies, customer service training, enhanced cleaning regimes) will be covered in the Enhanced Partnership documents?

We note the reference to decisions on bus information awaiting results from a consultation, so some of the other information-based needs of passengers are likely to follow in future versions of the BSIP. We would be interested to have sight of this when you have the results.

The current wording in the BSIP (section 4.4.2.1) hints at a passive role for the council in the development of the Passenger Charter, with the emphasis placed upon operators. We recommend starting a conversation with the operators about your Passenger Charter at the earliest opportunity, as this can provide a useful way to help develop your BSIP and to feed into EP discussions, as Mike mentioned in the webinar earlier last week. Our understanding is that you must commit to producing a Passenger Charter in the BSIP, even if the Charter itself follows at a later date.