

SCRUTINY REVIEW – ONE PAGE STRATEGY	
Broad topic area	Traffic & Transport
Specific topic area	Improving Gloucestershire's Bus Services
Ambitions for the review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ To understand the role and responsibilities of Gloucestershire County Council (as the Local Transport Authority) in the planning, commissioning and delivery of local public transport services, and the role of district and parish councils. ➤ To understand the long-term strategic aims objectives and targets for Gloucestershire's local bus services and relationship with the Council's other transport and corporate policy objectives, including decarbonisation and the Gloucestershire 2050 vision. ➤ To understand what can still be achieved over the 3-year period of the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) to improve Gloucestershire bus services without the additional funding allocation from the DfT and the basis on which a future BSIP bid or similar could be successful. ➤ To understand how customer experience and expectations and accessibility to essential services are taken into consideration in decision making processes. ➤ To understand how GCC's contracting processes can support transport decarbonisation and air quality targets.
How do we perform at the moment?	<p>Prior to Covid over 20m bus journeys were made on Gloucestershire local bus services, with around 90% of these on commercially run routes. County Council funding was targeted to communities at risk of social isolation, to ensure that a high percentage of households can access essential services. Over the past decade the local bus network and bus services have been more reliable than at present. The number of bus operators has been in decline and community transport operators had also been consolidating over this period. Investment in new vehicles was primarily led by Stagecoach, the dominant operator, whose young fleet age contrasted with the older fleet used on many Council contracts.</p> <p>Locally and nationally Covid has had a major impact on the revenue receipts with services only having around 70% of the patronage experienced prior to Covid. Timetable and service changes from September 2021 have reduced services and Stagecoach are withdrawing further services in late 2022. Inflation and the UK labour shortage have been significant with driver salaries and fuel costs driving a significant cost increases. These factors have led to driver shortages, reliability issues and bus companies looking to reduce services leaving communities in Gloucestershire's towns and villages lacking regular services. Further deterioration is a risk when the Bus Recovery Grant ends between January and March 2023.</p>
Who and how should we consult?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bus users. ➤ The DfT. Representative invited to a meeting. ➤ Commercial bus operators (Stagecoach and Pulhams). Representatives invited to a meeting. ➤ Smaller bus operators and Community Transport providers that do not run commercial services. Representatives invited to a meeting. ➤ District and parish representatives from one rural and one urban district, and one rural parish.
Background information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Motion to Council (6 July 2022). Minutes of the full Council meeting can be found here: LINK ➤ Gloucestershire's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP): LINK
Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Democratic Services ➤ Assistant Director of Traffic and Transport and Integrated Transport Manager ➤ Transport Planning Manager
How long will it take?	December 2022 to September 2023 (aim to report back to 6 September 2023 Environment Scrutiny Committee).
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recommendations on how public transport access to essential services can be sustained and improved, including ways that district and parish councils can support these objectives. ➤ Advice/recommendations to Cabinet on funding priorities as part of future network planning and the budget setting process.

