

**Glasgow City Council****Economy, Housing, Transport and Regeneration
City Policy Committee****Report by George Gillespie, Executive Director of
Neighbourhoods, Regeneration and Sustainability****Contact: Kevin Argue Ext 78086****Bus Workstreams Update****Purpose of Report:**

To provide an update on the key programmes of work that are collectively supporting and enhancing bus services across Glasgow. This includes progress and key developments relating to the Glasgow City Region Bus Partnership, the Bus Partnership Fund, SPT capital funding, and the work of the Bus Operators Coordination Group.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Committee:

- (i) Note progress of work related to bus in Glasgow
- (ii) Note the current position on funding for 2026/27

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes No consulted: Yes No

1 Background

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with a comprehensive update on the wide-ranging programme of work underway to support and enhance bus services across Glasgow. This includes progress and key developments relating to the Glasgow City Region Bus Partnership, the Bus Partnership Fund, SPT capital funding, and the work of the Bus Operators Coordination Group.

2 Glasgow City Region Bus Partnership

- 2.1 Over the past year, the Glasgow City Region Bus Partnership (GCRBP) has evolved - shifting from a primarily coordination-focused arrangement to a more formalised, structured, and delivery-driven partnership. This step change has been anchored by the signing of the voluntary GCR Bus Partnership Accord by all partners, establishing a clearer governance framework and a strong, shared foundation for collaborative action between Glasgow City Council, neighbouring local authorities, bus operators and SPT.
- 2.2 The focus of the GCRBP has increasingly sharpened on strategic alignment across the bus sector bringing together funding bids and investment priorities into a more coherent and purposeful programme of work. This has enabled a stronger emphasis on improving bus reliability, addressing the impacts of congestion, and presenting a stronger, unified regional voice when engaging with national stakeholders and funding partners.
- 2.3 Alongside these strengthened governance arrangements, the Partnership has driven forward the development of bus priority corridors across the city region, underpinned by commissioned design and appraisal work and supported by a more coordinated, strategic approach to communications and stakeholder engagement.
- 2.4 A notable development over the last year has been the decision to extend and place the role of the Independent Chair on a more sustainable footing, reflecting the high value the Partnership places on strong, credible and impartial leadership. The continued commission of Dr George Hazel OBE as Independent Chair has been widely recognised as instrumental in sustaining momentum, deepening relationships between partners and elevating the profile of the GCRBP with funders and decision-makers. In recognition of this impact, agreement has been reached in principle for the Independent Chair role to be jointly funded by partner authorities from 2026/27 for a two-year period. This commitment signals a shared confidence in the partnership's objectives and provides essential continuity as the next phase of delivery, governance reform and investment is advanced.
- 2.5 Details of the key delivery priorities of the GCRBP are being developed by Working Groups, overseen by the Steering Group, and actioned by the relevant member(s) as funding is secured. The priority areas of these Working Groups are:

- Bus Priority Measures
- Bus Infrastructure Improvements
- Passenger Experience Enhancements
- Network Development & Service Enhancement
- Decarbonisation & Sustainability
- Data, Monitoring & Performance
- Ticketing simplification

2.6 The importance of bus services, and the role of the Glasgow City Region Bus Partnership (GCRBP), is reinforced by recent research undertaken by the University of Glasgow's Urban Big Data Centre, which provides a clear and robust evidence base on the economic and societal costs of bus congestion in Glasgow. The study, *The Price of Bus Delays in Glasgow (2026)*, estimates that traffic congestion results in approximately 1.2 million hours of bus passenger time being lost each year, with an associated economic cost of around £24 million per annum, based on recognised values of travel time from Scottish Transport Appraisal Guidance. The research highlights that congestion disproportionately affects some of the city's key bus corridors, undermines service reliability, and has wider impacts on access to employment, education, healthcare and the local economy. Importantly, the report concludes that targeted bus priority measures—such as dedicated bus lanes, bus gates and signal priority—have demonstrated the potential to deliver substantial time savings and economic benefits, providing a strong evidence base to support continued collaborative investment through the GCRBP to improve bus reliability and journey times across the city region.

3 The Bus Infrastructure Fund 2025/26

3.1 The Scottish Government's Bus Infrastructure Fund (BIF) investment supports the development and construction of a wide range of bus infrastructure projects across Scotland - from bus lanes and bus priority signals to accessible features and transport hubs. These improvements are designed to shorten journey times, increase reliability, and improve integration with other modes of transport, ultimately encouraging more people to choose the bus for everyday journeys.

3.2 Administered through a two-tier funding model, the BIF supports local authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships working collaboratively with bus operators to design and deliver infrastructure improvements that make bus travel more accessible, reliable, and attractive.

3.3 Bus Infrastructure Fund - Tier 1

3.3.1 Tier 1 funding of £10m has been distributed to all local authorities on a per capita basis based on levels of transport poverty. Glasgow's allocation of £88,000 will primarily fund bus stop accessibility improvements and the recent "Don't Be a Bus Blocker" behaviour change campaign to support smoother travel for bus passengers. This collaborative campaign which involved all Glasgow City Region local authorities, SPT and local bus operators, has been shortlisted

at the Scottish Transport Awards. Further details of the campaign can be found in Appendix 2.

3.4 Bus Infrastructure Fund - Tier 2

3.4.1 Local Authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships were invited to submit prioritised projects for consideration through the Bus Infrastructure Fund on behalf of their respective Partnerships. These proposals were reviewed by the Glasgow City Region Bus Partnership (GCRBP), providing a forum for partners to challenge, refine and agree a coordinated programme of investment. Projects taken forward for funding bids were formally endorsed by the group, ensuring they aligned with the shared regional vision, demonstrated cross-boundary benefit, and contributed directly to the core objectives of the Tier 2 awards, including improved bus reliability, journey time savings and network performance. This approach demonstrated the value of the GCRBP in providing strategic oversight, strengthening collaboration between partners, and presenting a single, robust prioritised investment programme to Transport Scotland.

3.4.2 A key aim of the Bus Infrastructure Fund, particularly for Tier 2 funding, is that local authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships work collaboratively with bus operators for the benefit of bus passengers in their area.

3.4.3 Through this process, £1,270,000 was awarded to Glasgow City Council through BIF Tier 2, following a council-led bid to Transport Scotland on behalf of Glasgow City Region Bus Partnership. This funding element either has progressed or will progress the following projects:

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) pilot (Pollokshaws Road) - £490,000. Work is well advanced on an initiative that will enable council officers to amend traffic signal timing plans using AI-informed insights drawn from real-time and historical data. AI-based signals can help reduce bus congestion and journey delays by optimising green time allocation, improving corridor coordination, offering priority to buses and responding quickly to incidents or unexpected changes in traffic demand. The initiative builds on a smaller-scale trial conducted last year, which delivered journey time reductions of up to 50%. Further updates on the progress of this highly innovative project will follow as soon as possible.
- The Paisley Road West Bus Corridor project seeks to improve a strategically important public transport route linking Paisley Town Centre with Glasgow city centre, which supports high-frequency bus services, cross-boundary travel and access to key destinations but is currently affected by congestion and reliability issues. An allocation of £450,000 has been secured to undertake detailed design work, which will develop proposals for bus priority and supporting infrastructure to address congestion pinch points, improve journey time reliability and enhance passenger facilities, informed by data collection to support the business case and preliminary design work. A [contractor appointment was approved by the Contracts and Property Committee in February 2026](#), and work is now well underway to map key

stakeholders and develop a comprehensive engagement plan. This will include a programme of engagement events and the preparation of tailored briefing materials, in advance of early stakeholder engagement planned for June and July.

- The Pollokshaws Road Bus Corridor project focuses on improving a key arterial route between Eglinton Toll and Glasgow City Centre which supports high-frequency bus services and provides an important connection between the south of the city and key destinations. The corridor currently experiences congestion and reliability issues which impact on bus journey times and passenger experience. An allocation of £300,000 has been secured to progress detailed design work, which will develop proposals for bus priority and supporting infrastructure to address identified constraints, improve journey time reliability and strengthen corridor performance, informed by data collection to support the business case and preliminary design work. A [contractor appointment was approved by the Contracts and Property Committee in February 2026](#), and work is now underway to map key stakeholders and develop a comprehensive engagement plan. This will include a programme of engagement events and the preparation of tailored briefing materials, in advance of early stakeholder engagement planned for June and July.
- The Hope Street improvements project focuses on enhancing a key street within Glasgow city centre that plays an important role in supporting bus movements and access to central destinations. An allocation of £30,000 was secured to complete earlier design work, to take to tender readiness. The design work which includes upgrades to the passenger environment features wider footways, modernised junctions, improved pedestrian crossings, upgraded bus shelters, and real-time passenger information, has now been delivered, and the scheme is currently awaiting the approval of BIF 26/27 funding to proceed to construction.

4 Bus Infrastructure Fund 2026/27

- 4.1 The Bus Infrastructure Fund (BIF) represents a new capital grant fund for 2026-27 to be used to deliver bus infrastructure. It forms part of a broader package of £523.3 million of Scottish Government funding to support Bus and Concessionary Fares in 2026-27.
- 4.2 For 2026/27, the Scottish Government has allocated £60 million of capital funding for BIF- increasing from £20 million in 2025-26. Within the current financial year, the tiered approach to funding will continue. Tier 1 will increase from £10 million to £20 million, to be delivered to local authorities directly through the General Capital Grant. This will provide funding for a broad range of bus infrastructure to support local public transport services.
- 4.3 A review of the BIF policy intent, and the distribution methodology for Tier 1, has recently been undertaken and agreed with COSLA. This takes into account the National Transport Strategy Vision for Scotland's transport system, for a *sustainable, inclusive, safe and accessible transport system, helping deliver a*

healthier, fairer and more prosperous Scotland for communities, businesses and visitors.

- 4.4 The BIF policy aim is to increase bus usage and encourage people to rely less on private car journeys, while ensuring a just transition across Scotland in line with the draft Transport Just Transition Plan People and Communities. The document itself notes that "*The transition is an opportunity to tackle the transport inequities that people currently face – including the place-based challenges facing rural and island communities, barriers affecting disabled people and the safety issues facing women and girls*".
- 4.5 To achieve this aim through bus infrastructure, Transport Scotland have developed the following policy outcomes:
- Reliable and efficient bus network
 - Safe, affordable and accessible bus infrastructure
 - Improved integration between buses and other modes
 - Innovative, high quality and consistent bus infrastructure
- 4.6 Together these aims and associated outcomes will play a pivotal role in transforming bus travel into a more attractive, accessible and fully integrated option. By encouraging more people to choose the bus over reliance on private car use, they will directly support action on the climate emergency while promoting healthier, more sustainable travel choices. Investment in infrastructure - particularly bus priority measures will also support more reliable and efficient operations. This in turn, will enable local authorities and Regional Transport Partnerships in Voluntary Bus Partnerships to secure meaningful commitments from operators to reinvest the resulting efficiencies, including through enhanced services and service improvements for passengers.
- 4.7 The challenges and opportunities in relation to bus services, and the bus infrastructure needed to support them, will vary depending on location and local circumstances. Therefore, the measures local authorities wish to take forward will reflect these local conditions, and contributions to policy outcomes will differ depending on the issues arising in those locations. Tier 1 will continue to be distributed through the General Capital Grant across all 32 local authorities, using the following indicators and weightings:
- a. Rural dispersion – 50%
 - b. Income deprivation – 30%
 - c. Disability benefit recipients – 10%
 - d. Population living in settlements of 10,000 or more – 10%
- 4.8 The Council welcomes this revision to the Tier 1 distribution model, as it takes more account of the challenges that urban areas face. As noted in section 3.3.1, last year, the Council received £88k from a funding pot of £10 million. It is now anticipated that the future amount awarded to Glasgow will substantially increase under the new metrics.

4.9 Tier 2 is now proposed to be £40 million for Scotland, increased from £10 million, to provide continued funding for on-going larger scale ambitious projects with a focus on bus priority in urban areas and construction projects provided via direct grant award to local authorities on behalf of Voluntary Bus Partnerships. Details of the proposed bids for 2026/27 that were submitted to Transport Scotland can be found in Appendix 1. Similar to 2025/26, these proposals were reviewed by the GCRBP, providing a forum for partners to challenge, refine and agree a coordinated programme of investment.

5.0 Bus Operators Co-ordination Group

5.1 The Council established the Bus Operators Co-ordination Group in January 2024 to improve the co-ordination of roadworks and other network activities. Priorities include minimising disruption to bus services and to improve journey times and service reliability. The group consists of representative from council service areas as well as bus operators and SPT.

5.2 Regular meetings of the Bus Operators Co-ordination Group continue to play a key role in maintaining effective working relationships and clear lines of contact. This ensures that network incident affecting bus services can be rapidly identified, directed and addressed by the appropriate council team. A recent example is the disruption caused by the Union St fire, where swift coordination enabled timely mitigation measures to be put in place and impacts on bus travel to be minimised.

5.3 The group also continue to focus on forward programming and planning for major infrastructure works and events, ensuring that the potential impact on bus travel is considered at an early stage. This is particularly important at this time due to the significant scale of improvement works ongoing in the city centre.

5.4 Discussions with SPT and the Scottish Roads Works Commissioner regarding the harnessing of available data and technology to supplement existing co-ordination processes continues, and recent system updates have enabled greater focus on the impact of roadworks on bus travel. It is anticipated that further improvements will be made going forward.

5.5 Bus operators also use this group to highlight road conditions and receive updates on upcoming planned improvements through resurfacing / patching projects and pothole repairs. This represents another example of the positive working and exchange of information to improve operational effectiveness. The Council's Road Safety Inspection approach takes into account a range of factors to support the assessment of risks to determine remedial works.

6.0 SPT Funding 2025/26

- 6.1 This competitive bid fund provides financial support for targeted improvements to public transport infrastructure, including bus stops and access arrangements at SPT subway stations. Through this fund, the Council secured investment to deliver a package of measures aimed at enhancing the reliability, accessibility and overall quality of public transport facilities across the city.
- 6.2 Funding secured through the programme included £150,000 for bus traffic route priority upgrades, delivering targeted interventions to improve bus journey reliability, reduce delays, and strengthen network performance on key corridors. In addition, £275,000 was invested in enhancing access to bus and subway stations. This investment, informed by an accessibility audit commissioned by SPT, supports improved interchange, more inclusive access and safer pedestrian connections for passengers.

7.0 SPT Funding 2026/27

- 7.1 SPT capital funding has been secured for 2026/27 to drive forward a programme of high-impact bus and accessibility interventions across the city. This includes £150,000 to deliver three fixed bus lane enforcement cameras, strengthening compliance at critical locations and supporting more reliable journey times and improved network performance. A further £150,000 has been awarded to progress design work for the proposed Southern City Centre Bus Hub at Osborne Street / King Street, enabling the development of a coordinated, high-quality interchange. This investment will address existing operational constraints and play a key role in supporting ongoing redevelopment in the area.
- 7.2 In addition, SPT funding of £150,000 has been secured to deliver a programme of targeted accessibility improvements in the vicinity of the Glasgow Subway stations. These interventions will enhance pedestrian access, improve interchange quality and strengthen inclusivity across the public transport network. The works will play an important role in removing barriers to travel for disabled people and those with mobility impairments, while reinforcing integration between bus services, the Subway and the wider sustainable travel networks. Collectively, this investment supports the delivery of regional and national transport objectives and helps ensure the public transport system is accessible and well connected.

8.0 Fares and Policy Implications

- 8.1 In early 2026 Glasgow City Council undertook a Free Public Transport Pilot across the city. Whilst this was a targeted pilot, it is currently the most detailed study on the implications of free public transport within the UK.
- 8.2 The pilot consisted of 1000 people made up from two cohorts to establish:
- Impacts of free travel on modal shift; and
 - Social impacts of free travel

- 8.3 The pilot period ran for 6 weeks, providing those involved a Zonecard which allowed free travel on Bus, Rail and Subway across Zonecard zones 1 and 2.
- 8.4 Pilot participants were required to complete a series of monitoring surveys and travel diaries as part of the access requirements. Responses are currently being analysed and will be reported to committee later this year.
- 8.5 It is important to note that while this was a Glasgow City Council venture, bus, rail and Subway operators were all part of the pilot development through the Zonecard forum.
- 8.6 GCC note that the Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS) region have recently participated in a Scottish Government funded pilot which caps bus fares at £2. Glasgow City Council through the Convenor for Climate, Glasgow Green Deal, Transport and City Cen Recovery previously wrote to the Cabinet Secretary for Transport in 2024 making representations for this £2 pilot to be based in the city. Following the decision to base the pilot in the north of Scotland, GCC officers have been monitoring the success of the scheme and any lessons learned in anticipation of a wider national rollout inline with manifesto commitments.

9.0 Bus Franchising

- 9.1 In December 2025 [SPT presented a paper to their Partnership Committee](#) planning for delivery of a Franchise Framework Assessment (FFA) in support of the development of local bus franchising. Further to approval of the Strathclyde Regional Bus Strategy (SRBS) and associated Action Plan, it was agreed that a costed programme of works be developed to take forward a Franchising Framework Assessment (FFA), a key requirement of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019.
- 9.2 SPT are now developing and taking forward the FFA programme. GCC officers have offered assistance as part of this developing workstream.

10.0 Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	None.
<i>Legal:</i>	GCC Legal Services to conduct due diligence
<i>Personnel:</i>	No direct personnel issues
<i>Procurement:</i>	Any external resources will be procured through the Scotland Excel Framework

Council Strategic Plan: Deliver sustainable transport and travel aligned with the city region. **Mission 1, Grand Challenge 3.**

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2025-29? Please specify. Generally supportive of the stated outcomes.

What are the potential equality impacts as a result of this report? Positive impact

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage. Improving opportunities for additional, quicker, more frequent and reliable bus services can help address barriers many people in Glasgow face in accessing employment, education and services

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify: Action 25 – Develop a Glasgow Bus Partnership
Action 26 – Explore alternative options for bus delivery in Glasgow

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal? Bus related work looks to improve bus services in terms of reliability and shorter journey times to make it more attractive for the passenger. A greater shift from private car to bus would tackle congestion, reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target? Yes

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report
Y/N Not currently though commercial data shared by bus operators on bus service performance would be an issue in any future BSIP etc.

If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out

10.0 Recommendations

10.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- (i) Note progress of work related to bus in Glasgow
- (ii) Note the current position on funding for 2026/27

Appendix 1 - Glasgow City Region Bus Infrastructure Fund 2026/27

Bus Infrastructure Funding Bids 2026/27

Project Name	Project Description	Budget
GBP Paisley Road West- RIBA Stage 2	OBC for bus priority corridor stretching from Glasgow City Centre to Clydebank Railway Station	£750,000
GBP Pollokshaws Rd - RIBA Stage 2	OBC for bus priority corridor stretching from Glasgow City Centre to Kilbowie P&R/Drumchapel Shopping Centre.	£750,000
Hope Street Bus Avenue Works	Implementation of bus stop enhancement measures on Hope Street to complement Bus Avenue Project	£1,500,000
Park & Ride Review	Park and Ride review across the GCR, include appraisal of additional sites which focus on bus and bus + additional modes. Should include appraisal and identification of sites alongside prioritisation	£175,000
Review of Glasgow City Region Bus Lane Times	Review of Glasgow City Region Bus Lane Times of Operation & Enhanced Enforcement	£325,000
GBP Dumbarton Rd - RIBA Stage 2	OBC for bus priority corridor stretching from Glasgow City Centre to Clydebank Railway Station	£750,000
GBP Maryhill Rd - RIBA Stage 2	OBC for bus priority corridor stretching from Glasgow City Centre to Kilbowie P&R/Drumchapel Shopping Centre.	£750,000
Ai Optimisation & Virtual Loops	Introduction of Virtual Lops and AI capability at Traffic Lights	£900,000
SEC Bus Link	Appraisal for the construction of a new bus link through the SEC Campus and on to Glasgow Harbour	£250,000
A803 Corridor Study	Bus priority improvements on the A803 focusing on the section between St Rollox and J15 of the M8	£450,000
Mobility Hubs	Mobility Hub Feasibility Study	£200,000
Total		£6,800,000

Appendix 2 – *Don't Be a Bus Blocker* Campaign – Summary

The “Don't Be a Bus Blocker” campaign is a regionally coordinated behaviour change initiative delivered through the Glasgow City Region Bus Partnership, led by Glasgow City Council and supported by partner local authorities, SPT, Transport Scotland and local bus operators. It has now been run twice (Spring 2024 and January / February 2026) and we are looking at how this can be expanded wider.



The campaign seeks to address a persistent operational issue affecting bus services across the city and wider region—namely, illegal or inconsiderate parking within bus stops and bus lanes. Such obstructions have been identified by operators as a significant cause of delays, reduced service reliability, and poorer passenger experience.

Vehicles blocking bus stops and lanes can prevent safe and accessible boarding, particularly affecting vulnerable users such as wheelchair users, older people and parents with prams. This can result in missed journeys, extended travel times, and increased safety risks for passengers.

The campaign is designed to influence driver behaviour through a combination of targeted messaging and partnership-led promotion. Key objectives include:

- Improving bus service reliability by reducing avoidable delays;
- Enhancing accessibility and safety at bus stops;
- Encouraging modal shift by improving perceptions of bus travel; and
- Supporting wider transport outcomes, including reduced congestion and improved air quality.

Delivery of the campaign involves a coordinated programme of communications and engagement activity across the Glasgow City Region. This includes advertising on bus vehicles, bus shelter posters, radio campaigns, and social media messaging, alongside the distribution of advisory leaflets on vehicles parked in bus stops or lanes, where appropriate.

In addition to communications activity, bus operators are encouraged to report recurring obstruction issues through partnership channels, enabling targeted enforcement and operational responses.

Overall, the “Don’t Be a Bus Blocker” campaign forms part of a wider programme of collaborative activity aimed at improving bus reliability, accessibility and attractiveness across the city region. By encouraging responsible driver behaviour and keeping bus infrastructure clear, the campaign supports the efficient operation of the bus network and contributes to the Council’s broader transport, climate and public health objectives.

Further details of the campaign can be found at <https://www.glasgow.gov.uk/article/14221/Don-t-Be-a-Bus-Blocker-campaign-returns-to-support-smoother-travel-for-bus-passengers>