

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**GROWTH, INFRASTRUCTURE, PLANNING
AND THE ECONOMY CABINET PANEL
7 FEBRUARY 2020 AT 2.00PM**

Agenda item No:

5

INTALINK ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP

Report of the Director of Environment and Infrastructure

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1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide an analysis of the responses to the public consultation undertaken in relation to proposals to adopt an Intalink Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme.
- 1.2 To provide a completed Intalink Enhanced Partnership document for consideration by Cabinet in light of new powers introduced by the Bus Services Act 2017 into Transport Act 2000 (the “2000 Act”); the responses to the consultation; the Equalities Impact Assessment appended to this report and the County Council’s financial position.

2 Summary

- 2.1 Following adoption of the Local Transport Plan 4, the County Council has reviewed and updated the bus strategy setting out how it will work with bus operators to improve local bus services in the county.
- 2.2 This report proposes that the County Council adopts a combined “Intalink Bus Strategy” (**Appendix A**) which brings together and revises the existing Bus Strategy and Intalink Strategy. The strategy includes proposals for an Enhanced Partnership which are also attached to this report (**Appendix B**). This is the final draft of the Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme which has been agreed by the bus operators. Any further changes would mean a further 28-day operator objection period which would delay the adoption of the Enhanced Partnership.

- 2.3 The strategy also takes into account new powers conferred by the amended 2000 Act, and how these could be utilised to deliver the County Council's objectives for the improvement of bus services.
- 2.4 The strategy does not propose any changes to the County Council's value for money based approach to prioritising funding for contracted bus services, as consulted upon and adopted as policy in 2015.
- 2.5 Response to the consultation
- 2.5.1 Copies of all the responses have been made available to Panel and Cabinet members by placing details in the Members' room and emails.
- 2.5.2 The 8 week consultation closed on 11 November 2019. The responses from the 2,460 questionnaires received are summarised in the following analysis:
1. The highest percentage of people responding were in the age bracket of 25-34 years old (28%)
 2. 57% of respondents used buses daily or weekly and so could be classed as frequent users
 3. 41% of respondents commute to work or education
 4. Most responses were from the SG1 (Stevenage) area
 5. 21% of the individuals responding to the consultation considered themselves to have a disability
 6. 89% of individual respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Hertfordshire County Council should be working more closely with bus operators and district and borough councils to achieve a more attractive bus network in Hertfordshire
 7. The overall majority of people responding to the questionnaire strongly agreed or agreed to the five main objectives set out in the Intalink Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme.
- 2.5.3 In addition to the consultation questionnaires received, the council received:
1. 7 District and Borough Council responses
 2. 4 Town and Parish Council responses
 3. 4 Bus User Group responses.

3 Recommendation

- 3.1 That the Growth, Infrastructure, Planning and the Economy Cabinet Panel recommends to Cabinet that Cabinet adopts The Intalink Bus Strategy and Enhanced Partnership proposal in **Appendix A** and **Appendix B** of this report.

4 Background

- 4.1 The draft Intalink Bus Strategy has been developed following changes to Hertfordshire County Council's transport planning context, the passing through Parliament of new bus legislation, and in response to a decline in the operational health of the local bus market.

Local Transport Plan 4

- 4.2 An efficient public transport network is key to delivering the many thousands of new homes planned in Hertfordshire to 2031. It is widely accepted that a continued car-reliant approach will place unacceptable economic, environmental and health burdens on the county. The County Council's Local Transport Plan 4 acknowledges and responds to this challenge.
- 4.3 Policy 1: "Transport User Hierarchy" of Local Transport Plan 4 places, in priority order, the needs of various transport users to be considered in the development of any transport strategy or scheme.
- 4.4 The needs of public transport users are placed behind opportunities to reduce travel demand and those of vulnerable road users (such as pedestrians and cyclists) but should be considered before those of all other road users, including car drivers.
- 4.5 Policy 9: "Buses", sets out the County Council's commitment to promote and support bus services to encourage reduced car use, by:
- a. Supporting the delivery of infrastructure including bus priority measures, focussed on a core bus network, and by minimising bus service disruption from road congestion and the effects of road works
 - b. Providing and maintaining all bus stops, and other bus related highway infrastructure, to a consistent quality and standard across the county
 - c. Utilising new powers afforded to local authorities through the amended 2000 Act as appropriate
 - d. Reviewing, procuring and supporting cost effective and efficient bus services to improve accessibility and respond to existing and potential passenger needs. Review existing services and take account of enhanced security provision
 - e. Working with a wide range of partners through the Intalink Quality Partnership to achieve improvements in facilities and services to improve the end to end journey by multi-modal interchange, accessibility, security and the journey experience

- f. Working with partners to develop appropriate passenger fares, encourage the development of smart ticketing and to improve the provision and accuracy of passenger information
 - g. Working with partners to promote bus services as an option for work and school journeys and promote and publicise the passenger transport network through a variety of media.
- 4.6 Local Transport Plan 4 furthermore recommends that the Bus and Intalink Partnership Strategies associated with Local Transport Plan 3 are reviewed and combined into a single document.
- 4.7 The Intalink Bus Strategy therefore sets out specifically how the County Council will deliver against these commitments.

Bus Services Act 2017

- 4.8 As outlined to the Panel previously, the changes introduced by Bus Services Act 2017 into the 2000 Act provide Local Transport Authorities with a range of powers to improve the local bus market, which include franchising, and two forms of partnership working arrangements. The Act also establishes requirements of all operators across England and Wales as regards open and accessible data.
- 4.9 Franchising, Advanced Quality Partnerships and Enhanced Partnership powers are available for Local Transport Authorities to use on an elective basis. The case for franchising and the two forms of partnership has been considered by officers, with the following conclusions:
1. That franchising would impose unacceptable risks and costs on the County Council, which at this time could not easily be mitigated.
 2. That the existing Intalink Quality Partnership, established under prior legislation, is in effect an Advanced Quality Partnership and could likely be converted formally. This would not qualify Intalink for any significant additional powers and would not extend the scope of what it can achieve.
 3. An Enhanced Partnership offers the best opportunity to extend the scope of the Intalink Quality Partnership to more effectively raise standards of operations amongst local bus services.

Franchising

- 4.10 The Act makes it possible for certain Local Transport Authorities to franchise networks of bus services. Franchising would allow bus services to be provided in the same way as they are in London, and in the same way that rail services are provided. It would provide powers to plan, develop and regulate bus services, for example offering passengers simpler, integrated Oyster-style ticketing and guarantees on service quality.

- 4.11 The powers are provided to Mayoral Combined Authorities (areas with a directly-elected mayor) automatically, whilst all other types of authority must apply to the Secretary of State for consent to utilise franchising powers. The Government would need to prepare the requisite secondary legislation under the Act to enable any other type of authority, such as County Councils, to access franchising powers. Only then could the authority formally develop a detailed assessment of the franchising scheme, consult and then determine whether to implement franchising.
- 4.12 The Government considers franchising as an option that would be primarily relevant to large cities or urban areas with responsibility for all relevant powers. The Department for Transport quotes the following in their guidance to authorities considering franchising powers:
- “The authority must demonstrate that it has a suite of powers in place to make franchising a success – authorities that have control of both local roads and public transport, together with planning responsibilities and control of issues such as parking policy, will be better placed to implement franchising as they are able to directly control many of the factors that impact on bus patronage.”*
- 4.13 Greater Manchester, as one of the Mayoral Combined Authorities to be given franchising powers, is currently out for consultation on implementing those powers. Similar to Cornwall, which has now decided to look at doing an Enhanced Partnership over franchising.
- 4.14 Discussions at officer level with Hertfordshire bus operators show that franchising would not be a popular or practical option in the county. It is also very likely that operators would object and challenge any proposals in the courts.
- 4.15 At this stage franchising is not considered a realistic or beneficial approach for Hertfordshire. In the circumstances that a case could be made to persuade the Government that a county area should be able to pursue such an approach, there is not expected to be any new money available from the Department for Transport to meet the very high costs of establishing franchising.

Partnerships

- 4.16 Partnership working arrangements maintain a high degree of competition between operators and avoid creating circumstances where uncertainty for operators impedes private investment in fleet replacement, operating facilities and new technologies.
- 4.17 Hertfordshire's existing partnership of public transport operators and local authorities, the Intalink Quality Partnership (known as Intalink), has facilitated co-operation between the multiple stakeholders involved in the county's de-regulated bus market for almost twenty years.

- 4.18 By working together on a voluntary basis, Intalink has delivered numerous successes for bus passengers including multi-operator ticketing, co-ordinated publicity and timetable information, and high quality bus stops and interchanges.
- 4.19 Membership of the Intalink partnership includes the main local bus operators, train operating companies, the County Council and until recently all ten district and borough councils. A partnership agreement establishes service standards for members, but there is no effective mechanism to ensure these standards are consistently met.

Enhanced Partnerships

- 4.20 Enhanced Partnerships take this further by providing the option for local authorities to potentially take on bus service registration powers, devolved from the Traffic Commissioners for Great Britain, the regulators of local bus services. Other licensing powers would remain with the Traffic Commissioners, and they would act as an appeals body in case of dispute.
- 4.21 The authority would be expected to work closely with operators to address poor performance where possible, but these powers would provide an effective enforcement mechanism against non-compliance, which the County Council would otherwise have little control over.
- 4.22 To enable maximum flexibility Enhanced Partnerships do not require local authorities to provide specific facilities or measures in the same way as Advanced Quality Partnerships. However, it is clear that a significant incentive for operators would be required to offset the additional costs placed on them in meeting standards which would lead to meaningful improvement.
- 4.23 Consistent feedback from operators and national research indicates that the single biggest obstacle to providing reliable, punctual and profitable commercial bus services is the impact of traffic congestion. A major 2016 study found a strong correlation between the impact of traffic on bus journey speeds and ridership, with a 10% increase in congestion relating to a 10% reduction in passenger numbers.
- 4.24 Hertfordshire County Council in its capacity as highway authority could deliver measures which substantially improve the environment for operating reliable, high quality bus services by implementing bus priority measures. These would deliver Local Transport Plan 4 policies and support the County Council's ambitions to reduce the number of journeys made by single occupancy car.
- 4.25 Both parties to an Enhanced Partnership (the Local Transport Authority and the local bus operators running services within the partnership area) are legally bound to deliver all commitments agreed by the partnership. Where the County Council has struggled to deliver significant bus priority, it would have a statutory mandate to do so. Where operators have not provided a consistent quality service across the county, they would be required to.

- 4.26 Section 138H of the Transport Act 2000 (as inserted by the Bus Services Act 2017) requires the Enhanced Partnership scheme to specify what facilities (if any) the Local Transport Authority will provide and what measures (if any) it will take under the Enhanced Partnership scheme. 'Facilities' are physical assets for example, the provision of new or refurbished bus stops or bus priority measures such as bus lanes. 'Measures' are anything else that the Local Transport Authority has agreed to deliver within its powers, or in partnership with district authorities (where they have the relevant powers), such as parking enforcement, increasing parking charges or better enforcement of bus lanes.
- 4.27 Once these 'facilities' and 'measures' are specified in the scheme and the scheme itself is 'made' by the Local Transport Authority (under section 138G of the 2000 Act), the Local Transport Authority is required (under section 138J of the 2000 Act) to provide those 'facilities' and take those 'measures' for as long as the Enhanced Partnership scheme is in operation. The only exception to this is where the Local Transport Authority is temporarily unable to do so because of circumstances beyond its control. So, if a Local Transport Authority failed to provide a 'facility' or take a 'measure' under the Enhanced Partnership, it would be in breach of section 138J of the 2000 Act.
- 4.28 Section 138K of the Transport Act 2000 enables a Local Transport Authority to vary the Enhancement Partnership Plan and Scheme but this is subject to requirements to consult. In addition, an Enhanced Partnership Scheme may only be varied if the authority is satisfied that the revised scheme will
1. Contribute to the implementation the policies in the Enhanced Partnership Plan and their local transport policies
 2. Bring benefits to bus users in the whole or any part of the area by improving the quality or effectiveness of local services or reduce or limit traffic congestion, noise or air pollution.

5 Proposed Intalink Enhanced Partnership

- 5.1 A new Intalink Enhanced Partnership is formalised in two separate documents: an Enhanced Partnership Plan and an accompanying Enhanced Partnership Scheme.
- 5.2 The Plan sets out the high level strategic context, including relevant policies and the nature of the local bus market, and agreed objectives for improvement. The accompanying Scheme is a technical document which sets out in detail the requirements of each party to the partnership, detailing on a contractual basis roles and responsibilities for delivery.
- 5.3 In Hertfordshire's case all elements required of an Enhanced Partnership are provided by the attached final draft Intalink Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme (**Appendix B**). It is proposed that the geographic boundary for both is contiguous with the Hertfordshire county boundary.

- 5.4 All local bus services registered to operate in the county would fall within the remit of the Intalink Enhanced Partnership, and all operators would be required to meet the standards as a component of each service's legal registration with the Traffic Commissioners for Great Britain. The only exceptions to this would be cross-boundary services with less than 10% of their registered mileage within the Enhanced Partnership boundary, and other specific groups of services excepted by agreement within the Scheme.
- 5.5 As mentioned, there is potential for the Traffic Commissioners' local bus service registration powers to be devolved to the Local Transport Authority in an Enhanced Partnership. This will be pursued through further dialogue with the Department for Transport and the Traffic Commissioners, to establish an effective enforcement mechanism against operators who persistently fail to comply with the requirements of the partnership.
- 5.6 Over the interceding period following publication of the Bus Services Act 2017, the County Council has engaged with Intalink and the Department for Transport to identify important objectives for improvement of the Hertfordshire bus network. A series of stakeholder workshops and surveys confirmed that joint County Council and bus operator objectives, in priority order, can be summarised as:
- 1) Prioritising bus services in traffic
 - 2) Improving the image of buses
 - 3) Upgrading bus infrastructure
 - 4) Closer integration of the bus network
 - 5) Smarter use of data and information.
- 5.7 The Intalink Bus Strategy (**Appendix A**) sets out in detail the context and rationale for each of these objectives, and a series of measures which aim to seek improvements in each. The final draft Intalink Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme (**Appendix B**) provides a more detailed delivery plan which has been extensively negotiated with local bus operators. The Intalink Enhanced Partnership would be in place for a 10 year period from adoption, with a full review of all Plan and Scheme elements after 5 years.
- 5.8 The new powers inserted by Bus Services Act 2017 establish an "objection mechanism" for Enhanced Partnership creation, in which local bus operators are given a period to object to proposals. The mechanism takes account of varied operator sizes and numbers in determining whether a partnership can proceed to be created. A majority of, but not all, operators must support the proposals for them to be adopted, which has been done.
- 5.9 It is important to reiterate that an Enhanced Partnership places a duty on all members of the partnership (including the County Council) to deliver against the commitments to facilities, measures and performance standards established in the Plan and Scheme, as summarised in Table 2.

- 5.10 The proposals in **Appendix B** have had extensive negotiations with bus operators and stakeholders. Following adoption these will subsequently form the basis of a legally binding contractual arrangement.

Table 2: Summary of Intalink Enhanced Partnership objectives and actions

1) Prioritising bus services in traffic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address congestion hotspots impacting services • Identify opportunities for bus priority packages • Mitigate the impact of roadworks
2) Improving the image of buses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise and enforce quality standards • Develop and implement a five year marketing plan • Take a consistent branding approach
3) Upgrading bus infrastructure
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-ordinate infrastructure improvements along core corridors • Protect and enhance bus interchange capacity
4) Closer integration of the bus network
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the range of multi-operator and smart tickets • Facilitate public transport operator co-operation • Co-ordinated publicity and information
5) Smarter use of data and information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand real time information • Upgrade website and app • Share development planning data • Pilot emerging technologies

6 Consultation Process

- 6.1 The public consultation process was planned and carried out with support from Corporate Communications and covered the whole of the county.
- 6.2 The public consultation was open for a period of 8 weeks.

6.3 Following guidance from the Department for Transport, officers engaged the with the following statutory consultees, to whom hard and electronic copies were sent:

3. All bus operators that will be affected by any of the proposals
4. All 10 Districts and Boroughs
5. The Traffic Commissioner – Richard Turfitt, Traffic Commissioner for the east of England
6. The Chief Police Officer, Charlie Hall QPM, Chief Constable for Hertfordshire Constabulary
7. Police and Crime Commissioner for Hertfordshire, David Lloyd
8. Transport Focus
9. The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)
10. Bus user groups.

6.4 The Campaign also targeted the following groups:

1. Residents:
 - Bus users and bus user groups
 - Paying full fare
 - Paying concessionary fare (older people, young people)
 - People who don't use buses but whose family members do (e.g. parents, children)
 - People who don't use buses
2. Elected representatives:
 - County Council Members
 - District, Town and Parish Councils
3. Education establishments:
 - Secondary schools
 - Colleges
 - University of Hertfordshire
4. Businesses/employers:
 - LEP
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Travel Plan Co-ordinators.

6.5 The consultation was made available to all users and key stakeholders for comment via:

1. The internet/website/digital media
2. Local libraries (hard copy and access to the internet)
3. Key stakeholder/operators/bus user groups and forums
4. District and Borough council offices.

6.6 Consultation documents

49 copies were printed and circulated to libraries, and residents had the option to contact the Customer Service Centre to request a hard copy with electronic versions emailed to all parish and town councils. All hard copies came with a freepost return option.

6.7 Easy Read

An Easy Read version was created and was distributed upon request. Engagement was also sought from the organisation Herts People First.

6.8 Posters and Flyers

Posters were displayed on buses, at roadside on bus stops and bus interchanges. Digital posters were displayed across the county on Real Time Information Screens.

8,000 flyers were distributed to over 200 locations in the county such as Tourist Information Offices, District and Borough Council offices, train stations and shopping centres.

6.9 Press releases and press ads

A press release was published at the start of the consultation along with advertisements in all Hertfordshire newspapers giving details of the consultation.

6.10 Digital and Social Media

An 8 week campaign ran on Facebook, Instagram and the Google Display Network. The ads displayed took the customer through to the online survey. Target groups were all residents in Hertfordshire from ages 16 – 70+.

7 **Consultation Findings**

7.1 A full analysis of consultation responses received is provided in **Appendix E**.

7.2 A total of 2,460 consultation responses were received, comprising 2,395 questionnaires completed on the internet, 42 paper copies questionnaires, 14 easy-read responses and 11 additional letters or documents (of which two also completed surveys). 30 groups or organisations responded, including six of the ten district and borough councils, three town and parish councils, six user groups, as well as the Competitions and Markets Authority, Transport for London, University of Hertfordshire and a range of other public and private sector bodies.

7.3 Responses were received from right across the county, representing all postcode districts, a wide range of ages, and those living with and without

disability and caring responsibilities. Over half of responses came from frequent users, with a further third using buses monthly or less often, and the remainder from those who never use buses, while commuting to work or education was the most common purpose for using buses.

- 7.4 There was distinct support (89% agreeing or strongly agreeing) for partnership working, recognising the involvement of many stakeholders in operating and managing the Hertfordshire bus network and infrastructure.
- 7.5 All five partnership objectives yielded support amongst responders, in particular “Upgrading bus infrastructure” (94% agreeing or strongly agreeing) and “Closer integration of the bus network” (94%). The other three objectives each received 86% or more support. Regular users were most likely to feel strong support for “Prioritising bus services in traffic” (93%) by comparison with less regular users (84%).
- 7.6 There was also clear support for all actions proposed by the Intalink Bus Strategy, most strongly to “Raise and enforce quality standards” (94%), and to “Expand real time information” (93%). The majority of the 15 actions received at least 80% support with only two, “Take a consistent branding approach” (79%) and “Develop and implement a five-year marketing plan” (75%), receiving slightly less strong but still considerable support.
- 7.7 Importantly, following review of the documentation, the Competitions and Markets Authority confirmed that it was content that the proposed Intalink Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme meet the requirements Competition Test, as set out in Transport Act 2000 schedule 10. A legal opinion was also sought on other aspects of the Enhanced Partnership in order to strengthen the proposals.
- 7.8 The Intalink Bus Strategy and Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme were presented to the Growth, Infrastructure, Planning and the Economy Cabinet Panel in March 2019. Members discussed and supported the draft proposals and the approach to public consultation. Specific queries raised by Members were addressed prior to public consultation, making certain aspects clearer, including the intention to deliver “quick win” interventions during the first five years of the partnership.
- 7.9 Members also queried the approach to ensuring buses play their part in improving air quality, and this was discussed with bus operators who had concerns that a blanket approach could make some services unviable. Instead a four-part strategy will apply to achieve county-wide targets, with higher standards in Air Quality Management Areas: (1) enforcing minimum vehicle standards on corridors improved with bus priority measures; (2) raising vehicle specifications on County Council contract services; (3) working with district and borough councils to incorporate relevant measures in Air Quality Action Plans; and (4) bidding for external funding opportunities.
- 7.10 In response to wider consultation feedback, aspects of partnership governance were clarified, including cross-boundary arrangements with

neighbouring local transport authorities to ensure co-operation and avoid a patchwork of inconsistent standards. There was also a need to ensure the partnership's review and variation mechanisms are effective, to provide for amendments to the partnership at appropriate points.

- 7.11 The additional inclusion of opportunities for wider stakeholders, such as local businesses, the Local Enterprise Partnership and bus user groups, provides for their engagement in partnership development, to provide feedback and to deliver bus network enhancements.
- 7.12 To progress the partnership's work it has been possible to commence development of bus priority feasibility studies in Stevenage, St Albans and Watford. Capital bids have been made internally and developer contributions sought to deliver such bus priority measures identified through these studies, and discussions are also ongoing with the Department for Transport to identify other funding sources to support the Intalink Enhanced Partnership.

8 Next Steps

- 8.1 If the Intalink Enhanced Partnership is adopted, the Enhanced Partnership under the amended 2000 Act powers becomes "made" and legally binding between Hertfordshire County Council and the bus operators. There is no contractual signing. Hertfordshire County Council would be the first in the country to adopt the Enhanced Partnership.

9 Financial Implications

- 9.1 The review of the strategy and scheme has been undertaken within existing budgets. At this stage there are no immediate revenue financial implications for the council.
- 9.2 To secure the ability to deliver against the required Enhanced Partnership "Facilities", a capital bid of £1million has been put forward in the Integrate Plan (IP) 20/21 to deliver infrastructure; other improvements would need to be made available from sources including the County Council, district and borough councils, developer contributions and the Department for Transport. Enhanced Partnership "Measures", to which the County Council would be committed to delivering, may also need to be funded from existing revenue sources. Engagement with Department of Transport is ongoing for future funding for bus priority schemes and a bid is in the current IP for capital funding to support implementation.
- 9.3 In addition, there would likely be an increase in cost of the County Council's local bus contracts, owing to increasing service standards which would also apply to contracted services. The regulations also provide for authorities taking on devolved registration powers from the Traffic Commissioners to recover their reasonable costs. Potentially further revenue funding maybe needed in upcoming years once the partnership has developed. Any

additional funding requirements will form part of a future Integrated Plan proposal.

- 9.4 If the County Council was minded to explore other opportunities such as franchising at a future date, then significant investment would be required to establish the governance arrangements and delivery mechanisms.

10 Equalities Implications

- 10.1 In addition to the duty under s63 (8) Transport Act to have regard to the transport needs of members of the public who are elderly or disabled, when considering proposals that may lead to service changes, it is important that Members are fully aware of, and have themselves considered, the County Council's statutory obligations in relation to equalities.
- 10.2 Rigorous consideration will ensure that proper appreciation is made of any potential impact of decisions on the County Council's statutory obligations under the public Sector Equality Duty. As a minimum this requires decision makers to read and carefully consider the content of any Equalities Impact Assessments (EqIA).
- 10.3 The Equality Act 2010 requires the County Council when exercising its functions to have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act; (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010 are age; disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. Although not a protected characteristic the impact of the proposal on Carers is also considered.
- 10.4 The consultation was designed to enable all different groups protected from discrimination to have the opportunity to take part. The consultation documents were available in alternative formats and promoted by a number of methods as detailed in the EqIA.
- 10.5 The EqIA on the proposal is included in Appendix F. The EqIA takes into consideration the potential impact the suggested proposal would have on protected groups. It was found that the proposal is not expected to have any differential impacts on the protected characteristic groups other than Age, Disability and Carers where it is anticipated to have a positive impact. Overall, achieving the principle objectives will help improve the needs of public transport users to make buses more accessible and convenient for all.

11 Appendices

- Appendix A: Intalink Bus Strategy
- Appendix B: Intalink Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme
- Appendix C: Consultation response form
- Appendix D: Easy Read
- Appendix E: Consultation Results
- Appendix F: Equalities Impact Assessment.

Background Information

Transport Act 2000:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/38/contents>

Bus Services Act 2017:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/21/contents/enacted>

Local Transport Plan 4:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/recycling-waste-and-environment/planning-in-hertfordshire/transport-planning/local-transport-plan.aspx>