



Ellie Harrison
info@getglasgowmoving.org

Our Reference: 202000124192

23 December 2020

Dear Ms Harrison,

Thanks for your email of 22nd November regarding the Bus Partnership Fund (BPF) and it's interaction with the powers in the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 (the Act).

As stated in my letter of 12 November the recently launched BPF is intended to complement the new powers in Act by enabling local authorities, in partnership with bus operators, to work together to develop and deliver ambitious schemes that incorporate permanent bus priority measures to tackle the negative impacts of congestion. The Fund will award capital funding to partnerships led by local authorities, to develop bus priority infrastructure on local roads: it will not provide revenue funding for bus services.

As you have noted in your email, we have stated in the application criteria for the Fund that we expect applications to be from local authorities in partnerships working towards Bus Service Improvement Partnership (BSIP) status, as defined by the 2019 Act. This link is to ensure that the measures sought by local transport authorities are relevant to the needs of services and passengers across their network. The Fund will be guided by the evidence on how bus services will be improved by addressing congestion, but we are also looking for partnerships to leverage further action and investment from local transport authorities and bus operators, so that more people make the choice to travel by bus. A bid for funding through the BPF does not prevent a local authority from exploring any of the toolkit of options offered by the Act and there are no restrictions within the fund criteria on the ownership or management model associated with an application bid.

In relation to your questions on the Transport Act it is important to note that none of the bus provisions

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot



provided for by the Act are currently in force and as such I am not in a position to comment on what funding will be available to local authorities in future once these powers are enacted.

Regardless of whether a local transport authority chooses to bid for the BPF we still expect them to explore all the options provided by the Act when looking to improve services in their area, be it further partnership working, local franchising, or running their own buses alongside existing options including the ability to subsidise services. Given that the situation for bus services varies significantly across the country in terms of network characteristics, we anticipate that the right approach will differ from one local transport authority to the next. This is why the Act is intended to provide a usable set of tools for local transport authorities to ensure that bus services meet local needs.

You have made a number of comments in relation to BSIPs where it may be helpful if I clarify further. BSIPs are intended to involve a stronger partnership element than the current Quality Partnership model, with operators and local transport authorities required to work together to develop the plans and schemes to improve services in the area and taking responsibility for their delivery. The range of service standards (to be provided by operators) and facilities or measures (to be provided by local transport authorities) is also intended to be more extensive and we believe that this will lead to an improvement in the benefits for passengers compared to the current model. Regarding your more technical points, should a local transport authority establish a formal BSIP and subsequently decide to vary or revoke all or part of it there is a process for doing so laid out in the Act. In terms of the timescale of a BSIP, the Act does not provide for them to last for a particular time period, although there is a requirement that a Partnership Plan specifies the period to which the plan relates.

As noted previously in your correspondence with Andrew, we hope to be able to consult widely on all of the Act provisions in order to make the guidance and regulations as useful as possible and I would appreciate the contribution of Get Glasgow Morning as part of that process.

Yours sincerely


TRANS : TS BAAT, Bus Regulatory and Funding Policy Unit

Scottish Ministers, special advisers and the Permanent Secretary are covered by the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016. See www.lobbying.scot

St Andrew's House, Regent Road, Edinburgh EH1 3DG
www.gov.scot



INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE

Accredited
Until 2020

