

Customer Services Tel: 0118 908 8302  
Email: rebecca.brooks@wokingham.gov.uk  
Date: 21<sup>st</sup> February 2022



**WOKINGHAM  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Transport Services  
Reading Borough Council  
Floor 1  
Civic Offices  
Bridge Street  
Reading  
RG1 2LU

---

Highways & Transport  
P.O. Box 153  
Shute End, Wokingham  
Berkshire RG40 1WL  
Tel: (0118) 974 6000  
Minicom No: (0118) 974 6991  
DX: 33506 – Wokingham

---

## **RE: Consultation Response to Reading Borough Council's Enhanced Partnership Plan and Scheme**

Thank you for providing Wokingham Borough Council with the opportunity to comment on Reading Borough Council's (RBC) Enhanced Partnership (EP) Agreement.

Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) is keen to work in partnership with RBC to ensure a coordinated approach to the delivery of local bus services across our respective boroughs. Following the significant impact of the coronavirus pandemic and the lack of clarity around future government funding, we particularly keen to support the shared objective of building a sustainable, efficient, and growing bus network that meets the needs of residents in both of our boroughs.

WBC welcomes the opportunity to be part of RBC's Enhanced Partnership Forum and undertake an observer role on the Enhanced Partnership Board. It is noted that several actions within RBC's Enhanced Partnership Plan's Delivery Action Plan require joint working between our two boroughs. WBC is supportive of joint working in circumstances where proposals align with both local authorities' Enhanced Partnership Plans, provide a benefit to both boroughs and where sufficient funding is available to deliver them.

It is understood that local bus services will not be permitted to use local bus infrastructure, including bus priority lanes and local bus stops in RBC unless the service meets the EP Scheme's quality standards or is otherwise exempt. At the current time, RBC's EP is unclear on what the expected service quality standards are that will need to be met. Whilst WBC fully supports the need for a certain standard of quality in local bus service provision, WBC is also mindful that any standards imposed must not prevent competition or be prohibitive to new routes and operators emerging in the local bus market either within RBC or any neighbouring authority.

I trust the above comments are helpful to RBC in the further development of your EP Agreement. WBC would be happy to engage further with RBC before the EP is finalised through the statutory legal process.

Yours sincerely,

*RBrooks*

**Rebecca Brooks**  
**Community Transport Manager**

