

Implications for work programme

This paper outlines current work programme for the Bus Working Group. Recent announcements on BSOG and fund to support low carbon emission buses have implications for the work programme. The group is specifically asked to consider whether:

1. The survey of interest project should be cancelled
2. The local transport policy tool kit project should be commenced
3. The low carbon bus procurement support project should be commenced
4. Whether there is any other activity the Partnership should be undertaking currently.

1 Background

The work programme of the Bus Working Group since 2006 has been focused on arguing for a change in BSOG to encourage low carbon emission buses and to develop the foundations for a market for low carbon bus demonstration and procurement outside London. With the enactment of the Local Transport Bill, the amendment of BSOG to provide a supplementary rate for low carbon emission buses and the announcement of a £30 million fund to assist the procurement of low carbon buses over the next two years, this objective has been achieved.

The work programme now needs to switch to focusing on the delivering wide spread procurement of low carbon buses across England. The BSOG amendments and capital funding does not apply to Scotland and Wales, although the LowCVP will seek to encourage similar policies to be adopted in Devolved Administrations.

2. Current work programme

The current work programme consists to five projects, these are;

1. Promotion of the low carbon bus specification
2. Survey of interest in procurement of low carbon buses
3. Bus Subsidy Advisory Group
4. Low carbon bus local transport policy toolkit
5. Low carbon bus procurement support activity

It is proposed that project 2 is cut short and projects 4 and 5 brought forward in response to the changed policy framework.

2.1 Promotion of the low carbon bus specification

The BWG will continue to promote the it's low carbon bus specification and to develop it in conjunction with the COMPRO consortium of European cities with the objective being to promote agreement on a common low carbon bus specification as widely as possible in the UK and across Europe and thereby avoiding multiple specifications for clean low carbon buses developing.

Proposed Action: Continue activity. COMPRO project is at a critical stage in clarifying specification. Activity will finish by end of calendar year, minimal draw on resources.

2.2 Survey of interest in procurement of low carbon buses

This project was seen as a natural extension of the Low Carbon Bus Procurement Feasibility Study, in that it would assess the level of interest from bus operators, Passenger Transport

Authorities (PTAs) and local authorities in low carbon buses and in participating in a Low Carbon Bus Procurement group. The approach would be to survey bus operators and PTAs and Local Authorities separately through a telephone survey.

This was primarily aimed at providing evidence to Government of level of interest in procuring low carbon buses as a means of securing funding for procurement. The announcement of the £30m fund has largely made this work redundant.

Proposed Action: Cancel project, no expenditure committed.

2.3 Bus Subsidy Advisory Group

Geoff Hoon, the Secretary of State for Transport, announced in December that DfT would be revising BSOG to introduce incentives for use of low carbon buses and link future increases in BSOG to fuel efficiency improvements, along with other measures. LowCVP has played a critical role in advising DfT on the issues relating specifically to low carbon buses and has been invited to sit on the working group DfT has set up to advise them on the forthcoming revisions.

In February the BWG has set up a sub-group to provide input as and when required to this Bus Subsidy Advisory Group (BSAG), the Terms of Reference for this sub-group are attached in Annex 2. It is anticipated that the Group's main work would be completed by Q2 although there will be on-going activity throughout 2009-10.

Jonathan Murray will represent LowCVP on the BSAG and will consult with the BWG via email, teleconferencing and meetings as and when required.

Proposed Action: Continue activity, highly effective means of inputting to DfT policy relating to BSOG reform, limited resource implications.
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2.4 Low carbon bus local transport policy toolkit

The "low carbon bus procurement feasibility study" commissioned by the LowCVP in 2008 identified the need for incentives for low carbon buses to be integrated into the terms and conditions of Quality Partnerships and Contracts entered into by local transport authorities and bus operators regionally, and for appropriate KPI's in bus service and supply agreements. The BWG will develop a tool kit incorporating standard T&Cs for inclusion into these legal agreements which can be used as a template by local transport authorities, bus operators and bus suppliers.

This will be an important resource for engaging with and support local transport authorities in supporting deployment of low carbon buses outside London.

Proposed Action: Commence project now in order to have deliverable by end of year. Propose to outsource, cost of £15k budgeted for. Annex 1 draft TOR.

2.5 Low carbon bus procurement support activity

The BWG will seek to facilitate the development of one or more consortiums to undertake a Low Carbon Bus procurement outside London using a Forward Commitment approach. This is likely to include disseminating information about LCEB BSOG payments and capital funding via PTAs and large bus operators and may involve running regional workshops.

The role of LowCVP will in part be determined by whether DfT envisage a role for LowCVP in the administration of the £30m capital fund, although this would not extend issuing funds.

Proposed Action: Commence project now in order to be in position to undertake dissemination activity during autumn. Annex 2 draft TOR.

Annex 1

Low carbon bus local transport policy toolkit Draft Terms of Reference

The objective of this project is to provide a suite of tools for implementation by local transport authorities with the objective of encouraging the uptake of low carbon buses.

The toolkit will form part of the resources the LowCVP will employ when engaging with local transport authorities to encourage the procurement of low carbon buses in response to the announcement of the DfT £30 million fund to support the procurement of low carbon buses.

It is intended that this work is contracted out to a group of recognised experts to ensure a fast and effective delivery.

A steering group will be established to:

- Define the project brief as a basis for an invitation to tender
- To assess tenders received by LowCVP
- To provide a steering group for the project
- To advise whether the deliverables fulfil the brief

The sub-group would only be formed for a limited period of time and would be dissolved once the report had been reported to the full BWG.

Annex 2

Low carbon bus procurement support activity Draft Terms of Reference

The objective of this project is to support the deployment of low carbon buses across England and to ensure the DfT £30 million fund to support the procurement of low carbon buses is used effectively.

The first stage of the project will be to develop detailed plans on the most effective role LowCVP can play which will be presented to the BWG for approval. The second stage of the project will be implemented by the LowCVP Secretariat and/or members of the BWG.

It is intended that this work is conducted internally by LowCVP and the BWG members and not contracted out.

For the first stage a sub-group will be established to:

- Input to the definition of the detail operation of the DfT £30m fund
- Determine whether there is an on going role for LowCVP in the administration of the £30 million DfT fund.
- Develop a plan to disseminate information to bus operators and local transport authorities.
- Determine the extent to which LowCVP will facilitate the formation of consortiums to procure low carbon buses.

The sub-group would only be formed for a limited period of time to develop the plans and would be dissolved once these had been approved by the BWG.

For the second stage of the project the BWG will oversee the delivery of programme of activity starting in the autumn of 2009.