



# Excellent Buses Leeds Group

## Terms of Reference - January 2022

### *Background*

The Leeds Civic Trust works to encourage high standards of design, architecture and town planning in the city. Our vision for Leeds is to become a sustainable, liveable and fair city in which transport helps people to lead rich, productive and healthy lifestyles, this vision is included in [Our Transport Vision](#) and is expanded on in other studies which can be found [here](#).

As the biggest city in Europe without a metro or a tram system, the bus services in Leeds are particularly important as they are essentially our main form of public transport, alongside the trains. Even if we did have a Mass Rapid Transit system (MRT), buses would still be important in connecting communities across Leeds that the MRT does not reach. But the Leeds Civic Trust and its Transport and Liveable Leeds Group believe that the bus services at the moment are just not good enough for a city of Leeds' size and importance.

The results of the community engagement project hosted by the Trust throughout 2021 which asked people to *'Imagine an Excellent Bus Service for Leeds'* reinforces this notion that the buses need to be improved. Gathering information from both bus users and non-bus users through a series of discussion groups, an online survey, an interactive online map and a competition of ideas, the project found that people believe the buses to be unreliable, expensive and inconvenient (amongst other things).

Following the results of the *'Imagine an Excellent Bus Service for Leeds'* project (which will be published in January 2022) the Trust now wants to action some of the ideas and suggestions put forward. These include some 'quick wins' and short-term solutions which can be easily implemented, to overarching long-term solutions on how our buses are managed and could be better operated.

Now is the time to advocate for a better bus service for Leeds, as there are several exciting developments happening with the bus industry and policies in Leeds, including:

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- The release of the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) in October 2021 and its public consultation occurring in the Spring of 2022.
- The impetus for Local Transport Authorities to improve bus services through an Enhanced Partnership / Franchising set by the [National Bus Strategy](#) (March 2021).
- West Yorkshire Mayor [Tracy Brabin's pledge](#) to bring buses back under public control, including simpler fares, contactless ticketing and greener buses.

### ***Group Aims and Objectives***

The overarching aim of the Excellent Buses Leeds Group is to campaign for and work towards an *Excellent Bus Service for Leeds* which would benefit the city's people and its environment.

Some key objectives of the group will be to:

- Monitor policies and updates from the WYCA and Bus Operators, especially relating to the BSIP / Enhanced Partnership / Franchising to help ensure that progress is being maintained.
- Work to action some of the suggestions put forward in the Imagine project, both 'Quick Wins' and overarching improvements. This may involve working with bus operators, competition entrants, the WYCA and others.
- Advocate bus franchising as outlined in the [Leeds Civic Trust Bus Manifesto](#).
- Work collaboratively with other organisations and groups who are also campaigning for an improved bus service (seeking a proposed partnership to support franchising), and work to lobby key stakeholders (to encourage greater bus use and push for franchising).
- Work with Leeds City Council Highways & Transport Officers to ensure that the target of increasing the use of public transport, especially doubling bus usage, is a key priority when identifying new projects and improvements.
- Monitoring schemes in Leeds to identify the success of such improvements.



### **Group Function**

- The group will meet on Zoom, a meeting hosted and shared by the Leeds Civic Trust account Gwen / John
- Meetings will be held at 5.30-6.30pm initially on a fortnightly basis, with the proposed dates of January 10<sup>th</sup>, January 24<sup>th</sup>, February 7<sup>th</sup>, February 21<sup>st</sup>.
- Group members are not restricted to LCT members and volunteers. The group welcomes any members who have an expertise on public buses, or how they are managed in Leeds, or anyone who has a keen interest in seeing improvements to the bus services in Leeds.
- The Excellent Buses Leeds Group will report findings and progress back to the Transport and Liveable Leeds group. Gwen
- The meetings will be chaired initially by Ruth Gelletlie.
- Agenda, notes and actions will be taken for each meeting Gwen

### **General Work Plan**

To be agreed upon at first meeting, but it may include:

- The LCT BSIP response
- Advocate for franchising
- Developing a bus franchising partnership with other organisations
- Arranging a conference focusing on the BSIP
- Social Media Comms Plan - (this should be interactive- for example the idea of 'bus accuracy survey' (people send in when their bus is late, misses, does not conform with what is displayed at bus stops)
- Developing the Excellent Buses Leeds website as a way to bring together key information about the project
- Supporting the Concessionary Bus Pass Campaign

### **Ways of Working**

To be agreed upon at the first meeting.