

Divisions Affected – ALL

PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

– 24 SEPTEMBER 2025

Future Bus Regulation Models

Report by the Director for Environment & Highways

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Committee is RECOMMENDED to**
 - i) **NOTE** the draft Cabinet report, and
 - ii) **AGREE** any recommendations it wishes to make to Cabinet

Executive Summary

2. The Council passed a motion in September 2023 to fund a study into the potential benefits for bus franchising in Oxfordshire, as well as the possible creation of a new municipal bus company.
3. In November 2024, a consultant was appointed to undertake a preliminary examination of bus regulation and ownership possibilities, as relevant to Oxfordshire. They were also asked to consider the effectiveness of the existing Oxfordshire Enhanced Partnership (EP). The consultant's report – herein known as the 'Bus Report' and attached as Annex 1 – was completed in April 2025, and sets out the options and their implications.
4. The Cabinet is now at the point where it may determine which, if any, option it wishes to pursue and is expected to do so at its meeting on 21 October 2025. At Annex A, the Committee is provided with the draft of the report being sent to Cabinet, including Annexes 1, 2, 3 and 4. This means that members of the Committee are being provided with the same information as is expected to be provided to Cabinet when it is asked to make its decision.
5. The draft Cabinet report recommends development of an Enhanced Partnership Plus (EP+) approach, and for a proposal to be presented for Cabinet Member Decision at a later date.
6. An EP+ could leverage most of the benefits associated with franchising, for example consistent branding, without the significant additional financial and resource risks and responsibilities that are associated with franchising.

Financial Implications

7. All financial implications are included within Annex A (the Cabinet report).

Comments checked by:

Filipp Skiffins, Assistant Finance Business Partner,
filipp.skiffins@oxfordshire.gov.uk (Finance)

Legal Implications

8. All legal implications are included within Annex A (the Cabinet report).

Comments checked by:

Jayne Pringle, Head of Law & LBP (Contracts & Conveyancing)
Jayne.pringle@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Paul Fermer, Director of Environment and Highways

Annex A	Report to Cabinet
Annex 1:	Oxfordshire Bus Delivery Options (Bus Report)
Annex 2:	Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA)
Annex 3:	Climate Impact Assessment (CIA)
Annex 4:	Leicester Buses EP+ proposal

Other Documents: [West Yorkshire EP+ proposal](#)

Contact Officer: Katharine Broomfield, Technical Lead for Bus Service Improvement, 07523800079,
Katharine.broomfield@oxfordshire.gov.uk

September 2025