

Decision Maker:	Director of Environment & Highways
Decision Title:	Vehicle Improvement Fund 2025/26 - Grant Awards
Decision date:	17 February 2026
Source of delegation:	<p>Express delegation was made at the Cabinet Member Decision for Transport Management meeting on 27 March 2025, linked <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <p>Delegation was given to the Director of Environment &amp; Highways to approve the implementation of individual projects contained in the BSIP Delivery Plan for 2025/26 (which includes the Vehicle Improvement Fund) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Transport Management.</p>
What decision was made?:	<p>The award of funding under the Vehicle Improvement Fund 2025/26 to local bus operators for upgrades to their bus fleets that aim to improve passenger experience and/or advance the decarbonisation of the bus network.</p> <p>The awards total £1.402M, (the maximum budget for this scheme was £1.443M), made up of seven individual grants.</p> <p>A robust application and assessment process was followed in determining these awards, consistent with the DfT funding terms (MoU).</p>
Purpose:	<p>The awards will support the purchase of 13 new electric vehicles and the conversion of a further 2 diesel minibuses. Various interior upgrades or additional features for a further 9 vehicles ranging from accessibility enhancements such as safety rails, installation of CCTV, USB chargers, 5G ready Wi-Fi and floor replacements.</p> <p>The initiative has attracted an additional £4.056M in collective investment from the operators. It also enables timely investment in the local bus network utilising DfT Bus Grant.</p>
Reasons:	The Vehicle Improvement Fund awards are in line with the purpose of the funding and with the DfT MoU for use of the Bus Grant funding.



In addition, this decision was approved by OCC's Capital Programme Board on 04 December 2025.

Other options considered:

The option not to award the grants was considered but there were no grounds to reject them given they were consistent with the purpose and availability of the funding.