

Statement of intent form

Section A: Contacts

1. What is your local authority name?

Oxfordshire County Council

Yes

2. Name and contact details of the reporting officer:

Dave Harrison, Senior Public Transport Planner
Email: dave.harrison@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Telephone: 07901331751

Section B: Funding Requirements

3. What do you intend to use your funding allocation for? Tick as many as applicable.

- Yes A. Improve current supported bus services
Yes B. Restore lost bus services
Yes C. Support new bus services or extensions to current bus services
D. Other

If you ticked A, please provide details of how much of, and how, your funding allocation will be used to improve current supported services:

The County Council intend to use £125,000 of the fund to improve supported bus services as follows:

- additional peak hour services on service 136 between RAF Benson and Wallingford
- a new Sunday service on route 488 between Banbury and Chipping Norton
- a new Sunday service on route 11 between Watlington and Oxford
- a new Sunday service on route 233 between Woodstock and Witney, including key links to the rail network at Hanborough station

We expect this element of the fund to contribute 77,935 additional bus miles over the year of operation, 45,460 of which will be within the financial year 2020/21.

The above is subject to receipt of acceptable tender prices.

If you ticked B, please provide details of how much of, and how, your funding allocation will be used to restore lost services:

The County Council intend to use £253,400 of the fund to restore lost bus routes as follows:

- reinstatement of a former peak hour rail link service (formerly X8) between Chipping Norton and Kingham station
- reinstatement of a broadly two hourly service (formerly 63) between Southmoor and Oxford via several villages remote from a main bus service
- reinstatement of a broadly two hourly bus service (formerly T2) between Abingdon, Berinsfield and Cowley, connecting two major science centres. We expect to be able to further build on this service with developer funds

We expect this element of the fund to contribute 87,000 additional bus miles over the year of operation, 50,750 of which will be within the financial year 2020/21.

The above is subject to receipt of acceptable tender prices.

If you ticked C, please provide details of how much of, and how, your funding allocation will be used to support new services or extensions to current services:

The County Council intend to use £210,000 of the fund to support extensions to current services as follows:

- supporting another authority to retain service 47 to an isolated village between Lambourn and Swindon. Without this funding the service will no longer serve Oxfordshire
- evening services on route S4 between Oxford and Banbury
- a new Sunday service on route X38 between Wallingford and Henley (which will be combined with some developer funds we have to extend the service to/from Oxford)
- improvement of Saturday services on route X9 between Chipping Norton, Charlbury and Witney
- a new Sunday service on route 40 between Thame, Chinnor and Stokenchurch, which is an extension of an existing service to/from High Wycombe

We expect this element of the fund to contribute 89,600 additional bus miles over the year of operation, 52,266 of which will be within the financial year 2020/21.

The above is subject to receipt of acceptable tender prices.

If you ticked D, please provide details of how much of, and how, your funding allocation will be used for other purposes:

n/a

4. Provide details of the duration you will use the funding for, including whether this applies to all of your responses to Question 3.

We intend to use all the funds, regardless of service category supported, within a period of one year between September 2020 and August 2021. This meets the Department's ambition of expenditure being fully utilised within one year.

Oxfordshire County Council has worked quickly to incorporate services provided through the Fund into an existing tender programme which is being published in early April for implementation in September 2020. The Council is required to competitively tender all services supported with the Fund. Contracts will be issued for a one-year duration, with an optional additional year if the National Bus Strategy identifies further funds for supported bus services.

Therefore, the funds are being spent in the shortest possible timeframe available to the Council.

5. Provide a statement on how your plans will meet the needs of local communities.

This should include:

- how you have considered the needs of local residents;
- how you have consulted local MPs;
- how the views of local residents have influenced your funding decisions (proportionate to the quantum of funding you are to receive); and
- the extent to which your plans meets the aspirations of local MPs.

Consultation has taken place with local parish representatives, the local bus users' group, local MPs and the main bus operators. Some Councillors, members of the public and community transport operators also contacted the Council directly.

A quarterly meeting of Parish Transport Representatives (PTRs) took place on 25 February 2020. Each of the 317 parishes in Oxfordshire is entitled to nominate a representative to such meetings, which discuss several topics but particularly public transport (given their former history as consultees to the bus subsidy budget).

Delegates were made aware of the Fund and invited to submit representations to relevant officers. Several provided verbal representations immediately after the meeting, whilst a further four have been subsequently received by email. Several members of the public who had obtained details of the Fund also contacted the Council directly via online forms or their local Councillors/MPs office.

Consultation took place with the local bus users' group, Bus Users Oxford, who provided extensive comments on their priorities.

The following MPs were sent a letter from the Leader of the Council on 2 March 2020 inviting them for their views: Robert Courts (Witney), Annaliese Dodds (Oxford East), John Howell (Henley), David Johnston (Wantage), Layla Moran (Oxford West & Abingdon) and Victoria Prentis (Banbury).

Both major bus operators in Oxfordshire submitted representations as to services they considered were appropriate for use of the Fund. Two community transport operators also made comments on services they wished to be considered for funding.

The services which have been selected were included in requests from four PTRs, a local Councillor, both bus operators and the local bus user group.

Did this involve consulting any of the following groups?

Yes, to the following groups:

- A. Local bus users
- B. Local residents who do not use the bus
- C. Bus operator(s)
- D. All current local MP(s)
- E. Other (Please describe here):

Parish Transport Representatives, some of whom represent communities who are not currently served by bus routes following reductions to services which took place in 2016.

6. Confirm that you will be publishing information on your website, within one month of receipt of funding, on how your funding allocation will be used.

Yes

If no, why not?

7. Confirm that you will be publishing information on your website as soon as possible after the end of the 2020-21 financial year on how your funding allocation was used.

Yes

If no, why not?