

# Bus Priority Rapid Deployment Fund (BPRDF); East Renfrewshire Briefing Note December 2020

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## Overview

“Central and local governments are concerned that car use will be higher than ever once the lockdown is fully lifted, given the potential lack of confidence in using public transport and restricted capacity due to physical distancing requirements.”<sup>1</sup>

“The Scottish Government is providing £10 million to support the rapid deployment of bus priority infrastructure by local authorities”. Focused on areas of highest concentration of congestion, the fund aims to “implement temporary measures, including bus lanes or gates, which make bus journeys quicker and more reliable for passengers. In turn, this will improve the attractiveness of bus travel by incentivising bus trips ahead of private vehicle journeys.”<sup>2</sup>

The BPRDF is being taken forward in parallel with the Bus Emissions Abatement Retrofit in order to reduce the most harmful emissions through exhaust retrofitting.

A total of £1.8m was awarded to the Glasgow City Region Transport Transition Plan Group with £276,112 allocated to East Renfrewshire Council (ERC) for

- Pop-up bus lane on the A77 through Giffnock Town Centre (indicative budget £63,000)
- A77 Signal Improvements (Linked to Giffnock Pop-up Bus Lane) (£120,750)
- Pop-up bus lane from Clarkston Toll to Sheddens Roundabout (£36,750)

The remaining allocation has been ring fenced towards monitoring & evaluation, communications and remediation.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.transport.gov.scot/media/47962/bus-priority-rapid-development-fund-guidance.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.transport.gov.scot/news/10-million-for-pop-up-bus-priority-infrastructure-in-scotland/>



Figure 1: Bus priority opportunities Eastwood & Newton Mearns

The justification for these measures in the authority area is reflected in the East Renfrewshire Transport Response to COVID 19 and the wider Glasgow City Region Transport Transition Plan. This sets out measures and actions to be taken forward in the area in response to the Scottish Government's Route Map through and out of the COVID crisis.

These plans highlight the importance of supporting sustainable transport modes as a key element of East Renfrewshire's recovery and to help residents adapt and renew in response to COVID. Relevant objectives include:

- To support walking, cycling and wheeling for all or part of commuter and non-commuter journeys as far as practicable
- Maximise safe and efficient use of the public transport including to support the continued viability of the public transport system.
- To manage the potential for an increase in private car use during the easing of COVID restrictions.

The main outcomes of and criteria for the BPRDF are:

- To target areas which are likely to suffer congestion once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted
- To implement bus priority measures, to improve bus journey times and make services more reliable
- To consider active travel, integration with other public transport and place-making
- To deliver bus priority measures which have the support of bus operators.
- For lead local authorities to consider equalities impacts of the works funded by the BPRDF and to carry out Equality Impact Assessments.

Although ERC do not consider the development of rapid deployment of bus priority appropriate while COVID restrictions are still in place (with guidance to avoid public transport), a key

consideration should be avoiding a return to pre-existing motor traffic levels. This will require traffic restraint, together with measures to further promote and enable sustainable forms of travel.

Initial dialogue with bus operators indicates support to undertake a trial within East Renfrewshire, where no bus priority measures currently exist. The fact that measures are temporary and will be undertaken on a trial basis provides an important opportunity to monitor and evaluate the success (or otherwise) of proposals and whether future permanent measures would be appropriate.

## Scope, Aims & Objectives for East Renfrewshire BPRDF

Initial assessment suggests that key arterial routes on the A77 and A727 through Eastwood & Newton Mearns offers scope to trial temporary bus priority measures. Justification includes:

- Key existing public transport corridors with access to key services, facilities and amenities.
- In terms of the A77 road corridor, access to the 'streamlined bus corridor' in Glasgow City.
- High frequency of services, particularly within Giffnock Town Centre (see Fig 2)
- Available carriageway width that would facilitate rapid bus priority deployment
- Areas susceptible to congestion (as signified by the reduction in average speed – see Fig 3) with opportunities to improve bus journey times.
- Address existing constraints to temporary 'Spaces for People' proposals through Giffnock Town Centre, which may otherwise impact bus journey times and reliability.
- Opportunities to reconsider waiting restrictions within Clarkston Town Centre westbound during peak am periods that are otherwise unenforced.

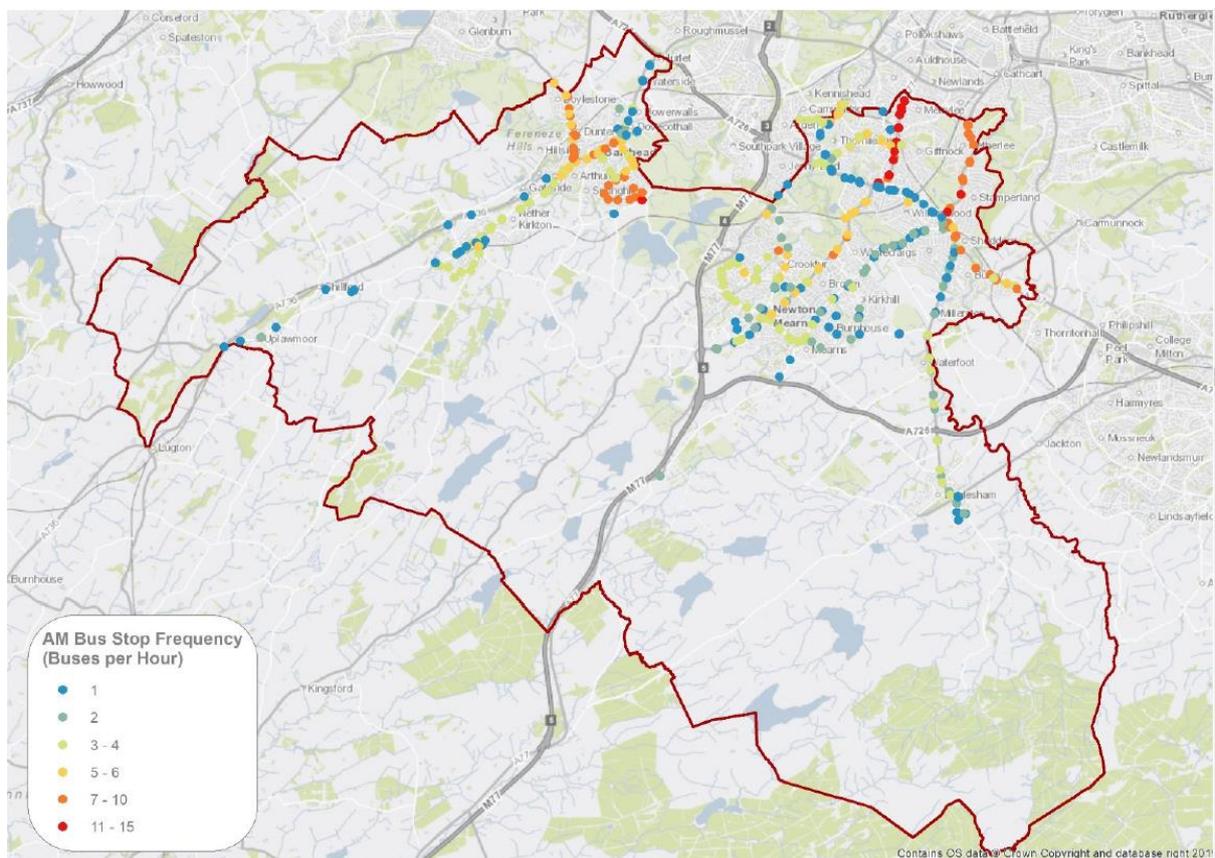


Figure 2: Bus Stop service frequency AM Peak

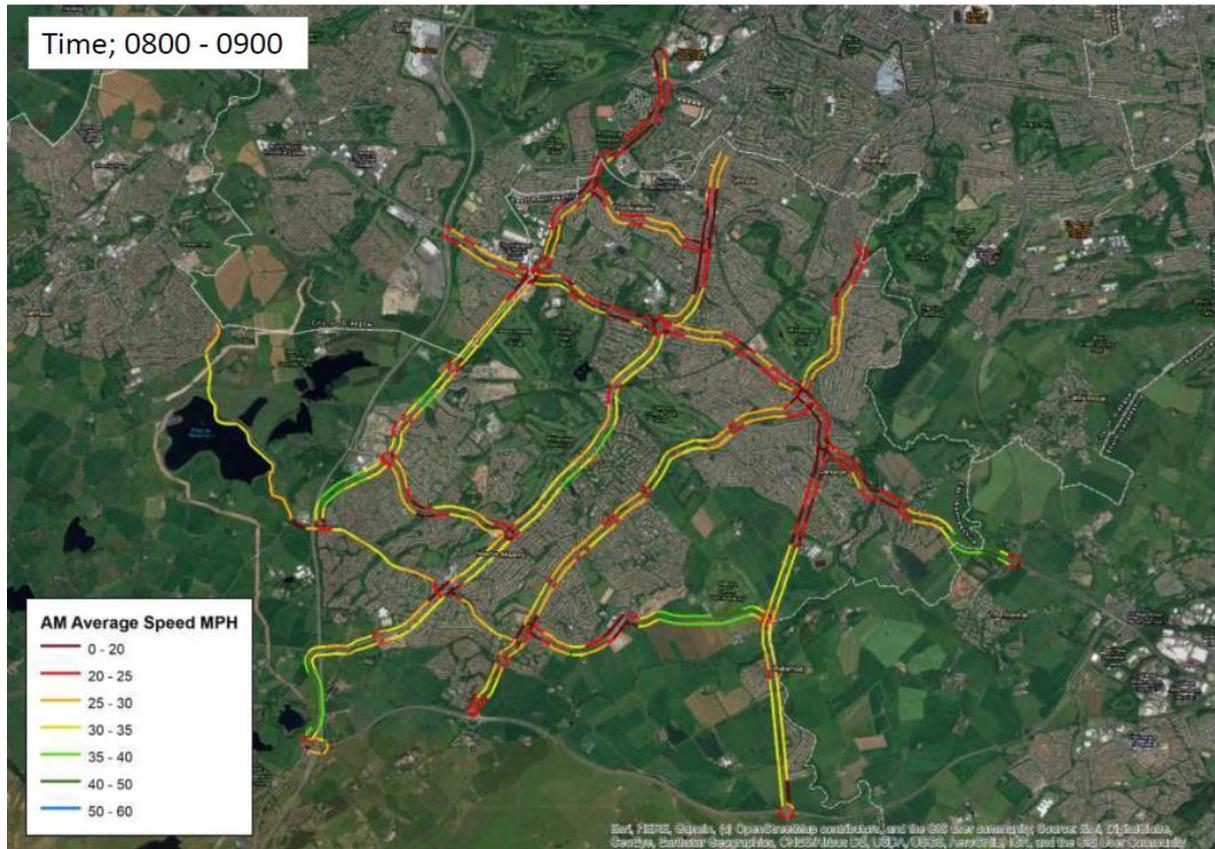


Figure 3: TomTom survey 2019; average speed Eastwood & Newton Mearns am peak (0800-0900)

**Key aims and objectives during the period of the trial may include:**

- 1. Assess whether bus priority have a beneficial impact on bus journey times along the A77 & A727 corridors.**
- 2. Assess whether bus priority measures lead to an increase in bus patronage and/or propensity for bus travel.**
- 3. Whether bus priority leads to an increase in bus passenger satisfaction.**
- 4. Assess impacts of traffic, congestion and public acceptability arising as a result of temporary bus priority implementation.**
- 5. Understand options and opportunities for future public transport integration to support the refreshed Local Transport Strategy.**

## Risk Register

It should be accepted that any changes, particularly changes that reallocate road space from private vehicles (with potential knock on impacts to car journey times) will be controversial. There are also anticipated consequences arising from changes to the public road network. A series of risks and key actions have therefore been identified:

<b>Risk / Impact</b>	<b>Actions</b>
Feasibility of measures proposed	TBC
Delayed journey times for motorists and associated real and/or perceived impacts on road network efficiency	
The presence of on street parking through Giffnock Town Centre and Clarkston Town Centre	
Potential loss of parking and the significance of this, as well as the real and/or perceived impacts on business	
Infringements, such as double parking or restricted vehicles utilising new infrastructure	
Impacts on walking, cycling & wheeling and, in particular, the ongoing Spaces for People programme	
Ongoing enforcement	
Public acceptability	
Support from local elected members	
Ongoing engagement and communications with public, businesses and stakeholders	
Measuring success (or otherwise) of measures	
Equality Impact Assessment	
Developed design / contractor procurement, including materials such as signage	
Ongoing maintenance and operational impacts	

## Scope of Consultancy Services

It is recommended that Engineering and Technical consultancy services are procured to undertake an initial options appraisal and feasibility study along the A77 & A727 corridors. This should be undertaken in partnership with bus operators – namely First, Stagecoach and SPT - and include

- a) Site assessment for the A77 and A727 corridors / key study areas and analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats.
- b) Options appraisal / feasibility / outline design
- c) Methodology for a suite of supporting traffic & parking surveys, plus assistance in procuring services
- d) Outline costs
- e) Data review
- f) Draft Monitoring & Evaluation Strategy
- g) Draft Equality Impact Assessment

Following presentation of evidence, options and available data within a report, proposals will be subject to community & stakeholder consultation.

Following a period of consultation & review, a separate commission for a delivery / route implementation plan will be undertaken. This will include detailed/developed design, necessary technical requirements and method statements as well as an ongoing monitoring programme to support BPRDF measures. The later includes the appropriate method statement and costs to remove measures should circumstances to remediate measures arise.