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<b>Report To:</b>	<b>Safe Sustainable Communities Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>6 March 2012</b>
<b>Report By:</b>	<b>Corporate Director Regeneration &amp; Environment</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>SSC/ENV/IM/11.110</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>John Collins</b>	<b>Contact No:</b>	<b>714840</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Proposed Statutory Quality Partnership Scheme</b>		

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## **1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval to promote a Statutory Quality Partnership Scheme along certain route corridors in Inverclyde in partnership with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) and Transport Scotland (TS).

## **2.0 SUMMARY**

- 2.1 A Statutory Quality Partnership Scheme (QPS) is a statutory agreement between parties to provide improved bus infrastructure and services.
- 2.2 The Council in partnership with SPT and Transport Scotland intend to promote a QPS covering the Port Glasgow, Greenock, Gourock route corridor and from Greenock Town Centre to its boundary along the A78. Also included would be Kilblain Street and Port Glasgow bus stations.
- 2.3 The above route corridors and bus stations match where there has been and will shortly be substantial public investment in bus infrastructure eg raised kerbs, bus bays, new bus shelters, new bus stops and information cases.
- 2.4 Bus operators wishing to participate in a QPS must give a written undertaking to the Traffic Commissioner that they will provide the specified standard of service when using the facilities.
- 2.5 The specified standards may, for example, include vehicle requirements and minimum frequency of service. Only those bus operators meeting "specified standards" will be permitted to use the "specified facilities".
- 2.6 The level of fares, timetables and frequencies and the routes served cannot be included in a QPS and will remain wholly controlled by the bus operators.

## **3.0 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 That Committee approve the promotion by the Council of a Statutory Quality Partnership in partnership with SPT and Transport Scotland.

**Ian Moffat**  
**Head of Environmental and Commercial Services**

## **4.0 BACKGROUND**

4.1 The Transport (Scotland) Act 2001 provides powers for local transport authorities to make statutory quality bus partnerships known as Quality Partnership Schemes (QPS) and also Quality Contracts (QC).

4.2 An authority, or authorities acting jointly, may make a QPS covering a corridor or area provided:

the authorities are satisfied that the scheme will to any extent implement their relevant general policies in the area to which the proposed scheme relates. The interpretation of what is meant by “relevant general policies” is set out in Section 48 of the Act and in relation to a local transport authority means the authority’s Local Transport Strategy (LTS)

and either

improve facilities and services to bring material benefits to users

and/or

reduce or limit traffic congestion, noise or air pollution.

4.3 Bus operators wishing to participate in a QPS must give a written undertaking to the Traffic Commissioner that they will provide the specified standard of service when using the facilities. Adherence to the commitment then becomes a condition of continued registration. Some exemptions may apply, for example, for longer distance services. The Traffic Commissioner is empowered to act against any operator who fails to meet conditions of registration.

4.4 Under a QPS, the authority provides “specified facilities” and only those bus operators meeting “specified standards” will be permitted to use the “specified facilities”. The specified standards may, for example, include vehicle requirements and minimum frequency of services. Specified facilities can typically include improved infrastructure, including bus stations, bus boarders, raised kerbs and bus priority measures.

The level of fares, timetables, frequencies and the routes served cannot be included in a QPS and will remain wholly controlled by bus operators.

A QPS requires all specified improvements to be in place for a period of 3 months before the date of commencement of operation of the scheme. A scheme may operate for a period from 3 to 7 years and can be varied.

The Scheme must set out the procedures for determining disputes between the authority and bus operators.

## **5.0 PROPOSALS**

5.1 It is proposed that the Inverclyde QPS will apply to “Quality Bus Corridors” where bus infrastructure has already been improved with public sector funding or where there are committed and funded schemes for improvement.

Existing Quality Bus Corridors cover the two main bus routes between Greenock Town Centre and Gourock (via Union Street/Newark Street and via Brougham Street/Eldon Street), between Gourock and Cloch Caravan Park along the A770 and from Greenock Town Centre to the Greenock boundary along the A78. Also included in the scheme would be the new Kilblain Street bus station.

There is committed expenditure over the next two years for a Quality Bus Corridor between Greenock Town Centre and Port Glasgow Town Centre and then onto Woodhall along the A8 corridor as well as a new bus station in Port Glasgow.

- 5.2 Bus operators will be expected to provide specified standards of service in order to participate in the scheme. These will be in relation to:-

**General**

Reliability  
Network stability  
Presentation of vehicles  
Driver training  
Customer Care  
Driver appearance  
Service development  
Information  
Fares revisions  
Smoking  
Provision of patronage data  
Fleet list

**Vehicle specification:-**

Accessibility – 90% of journeys to use accessible low floor buses.  
CCTV – 90% of journeys after 19.00 hrs to have a minimum of 3 cameras in each saloon.  
Communication – 90% of journeys after 19.00hrs to have two way radio or drivers to be supplied with hand free mobile telephone.  
Emissions  
Heating and ventilation  
Lighting and ancillary equipment  
Route and destination displays  
Branding  
Real Time Information

**Vehicle Maintenance:-**

Comply with VOSA standards  
Lighting and ancillary equipment  
Exterior and interior vehicle presentation  
Exterior and interior cleanliness  
Litter  
Information

- 5.3 Inverclyde Council in partnership with SPT will provide and maintain the following facilities for the duration of the scheme:-

Improved facilities at selected bus stopping places – new shelters, poles, raised kerbs, bus boarders, lighting, security, CCTV monitoring and real time passenger information.

Bus priority measures – these may include priority road space, traffic signal priority, bus pre signals, CCTV route monitoring and enhanced signal control.

Traffic Regulation Orders on routes, bus stop clearways and markings at bus stops.

Maintenance of facilities provided for the duration of the scheme.

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Funding for the A8 Quality Bus Corridor and Port Glasgow bus station will be by SPT. There are no additional funding requirements.
- 6.2 There are no implications for Human Resources in this report.
- 6.3 Legal advice will be sought regarding the Partnership Scheme and Traffic Regulation Orders.

## **7.0 CONSULTATION**

- 7.1 Best Practice for the establishment of a QPS is for the proposing authority to enter into preliminary voluntary discussions with local operators prior to and during first drafting of proposals. Having drafted a QPS, the local authority making it is obliged to publish it and undertake a formal consultation exercise in accordance with section 5 of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2001. If an operator considers that any obligation being placed upon it, which would permit it to use facilities provided under the QPS is unreasonable, in that it raises a barrier to entry which is considered to be excessive, then it may make an application to the OFT to apply the Competition Test.

The Council is at the stage of having received from SPT a first draft for discussion of a proposed Statutory Quality Bus Partnership Scheme.

## **8.0 EQUALITY**

- 8.1 Given the improved access to bus travel and service provision the Partnership Scheme will have a positive benefit to the Council's Equality Agenda.