



## **Shropshire Council's response to our 4 Transport Asks relating to public transport (August 2023)**

### **Our 4 Asks on public transport**

1. Transform bus services so that we achieve best practice and maximise the shift from car trips to buses.
2. Fund the transformation of all buses so that they are zero carbon. This would be progressive and use the same funding arrangements that have been deployed to fund the North West Relief Road (c£20 million) and the purchase of 3 shopping centres in Shrewsbury (c £50 million).
3. Introduce a "one ticket" public transport policy modelled on the Cornwall County Council policy. One ticket covers all buses regardless of operator and all local rail.
4. Design and fund a best practice Park and Ride service for Ludlow and Bridgnorth served by electric buses.

### **Answers from Shropshire Council to Our 4 Asks on Public Transport**

You may be aware that the council has produced its Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) which reflects the ambitions we have in Shropshire to transform public transport, which included additional services and a transition to alternatively fuelled vehicles, that culminated in our bid to the Department of £98 million to realise this ambition. Whilst like many authorities this funding submission was ultimately unsuccessful, at the same time the DfT have been very clear that those BSIP's produced will be the window for future funding opportunities and were a key requirement for the recent BSIP+ revenue funding support.

The council has also set up an Enhanced Partnership with bus operators to develop public transport and ultimately see more people use public transport, addressing the decline in bus patronage over several years. Part of those operators' discussions will be about how an integrated ticket approach can be developed, identifying best practice across the country and where that has been delivered successfully in a rural environment.

The town service in Ludlow which includes a Park & Ride element is like all bus services experiencing a drop in passenger numbers, but we are happy to work with the operator and stakeholders to look at options to improve patronage across the service. A similar service in Bridgnorth would need substantial investment and whilst that is not something that the council can fund at present, we will explore potential funding opportunities through our BSIP for additional services across the County where appropriate.