



Mr J Hopkins
Business Development Manager
Integrated Passenger Transport Unit
Essex County Council
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5th June 2018

Dear Mr Hopkins

First Group support for the Joint Transforming Cities Fund submission by Essex County Council and Southend Borough Council

I am writing in my capacity as Managing Director of First Essex to express the formal support of the First Group for the South Essex City Region Transforming Cities Fund submission.

We support the ambition of the City Region to deliver a package of transformational connectivity measures by 2022. We therefore ask Government to move this submission forward to stage two so that we can co-develop these proposals with our local partners and Government.

First Essex operates a fleet of 155 vehicles from our two depots in the South Essex area, carrying some 12,800,000 passengers per annum. We are committed to investing in the South Essex urban region to grow bus patronage and help realise our joint ambition to reduce congestion, improve air quality and enhance the local economy.

Through working in partnership, First Group are already investing in the latest m-ticket and contactless technology. This investment will significantly improve the bus offer in the south Essex area.

The bus market in the South Essex urban area has seen growth in recent years, but now faces substantial challenges. We need to work with our partners to tackle decisively the congestion issues that currently impede the bus network as we see an opportunity to increase the role that public transport play in unlocking the full economic potential of the area.



Working with Essex County Council and Southend Borough Council, we want to go further and focus on the following areas in the Transforming Cities bid:

1. Commit to marketing and optimising the high frequency services that operate along the main corridors and serve rail heads, supported by seamless integrated ticketing.
2. Investment in bus priority measures along the strategic corridors and key urban centres, in order to help sustain a successful growing bus network that becomes an essential transport mode of choice in the area.
3. Measures to support liveable town centres within South Essex by e-allocating road space away from the private car to pedestrians, cycles and public transport at certain key locations.

If shortlisted for Stage 2 of the Transforming Cities Fund, we commit to help develop effective packages of measures for the South Essex region.

This will build on our existing tried and tested partnership working with Essex County Council and Southend Borough Council

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Wickers', written in a cursive style.

Steve Wickers
Managing Director
First Essex Buses Ltd