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| NEWS RELEASE  | # |

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| 22 March 2024  |
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| **A fleet of hydrogen powered buses is set to launch across parts of Sussex, Surrey and Kent following successful bid for £10 million of government funding**  |
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|  Bus pictureA partnership between Metrobus (Go Ahead), West Sussex County Council, Surrey County Council, Kent County Council and London Gatwick has won a bid for funding to launch a new fleet of 43 hydrogen powered buses.The Department for Transport has awarded the partnership over £10 million, which combined with £11.6 million from Metrobus (Go Ahead) and almost £3 million from the other partners brings the total for the project to over £24 million.  West Sussex County Council is the lead partner and Cllr Joy Dennis, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport at the county council, said:“Not only is this great news for West Sussex, but it’s great news for the region that we have been successful in our bid for funding and can progress with the rollout of 43 new hydrogen powered buses across the counties.“This exciting  project is another example of our drive to offer low carbon transport options in line with the West Sussex County [Council Plan](https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/about-the-council/policies-and-reports/corporate-policy-and-reports/our-council-plan/)’s theme of protecting the environment, and our priority of developing a sustainable and prosperous economy.”The buses will operate across a wide area of Sussex, Surrey and Kent to connect rural areas with local towns and London Gatwick. Destinations will include Burgess Hill, Crawley, East Grinstead, Haywards Heath, Horsham, Worthing, Brighton, Caterham, Dorking, Redhill and Tunbridge Wells.     Nick Hill, Commercial Director, Metrobus said: “We are delighted to be awarded match funding from the government’s ZEBRA 2 fund for 43 new hydrogen buses making our hydrogen fleet one of the biggest in the country. Our contribution to this project is £11.6 million which we consider to be a critical investment in providing zero emission buses on the Metrobus network for our customers.“Buses are one of the most sustainable ways to travel. Hydrogen buses release zero emissions at the tailpipe, helping to reduce carbon emissions and create cleaner air for everyone.“This project is an excellent example of what can be achieved through partnership working by putting the transport needs of local people first.”When fully operational, it will be one of the biggest fleets of hydrogen powered buses in the country and the only one operating in rural areas.**ENDS** **For further information please contact the news desk on 0330 222 8090 or email** **pressoffice@westsussex.gov.uk****. For urgent out-of-hours enquiries please call 07767 098415.** Facebook  Twitter |

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