

CABINET MEMBER FOR TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION

RECORD OF DECISIONS taken by the Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation, Councillor Lynne Stagg, at her meeting held on Friday, 18 September 2020 at 4.00 pm in Virtual Remote Meeting

Present

Councillor Lynne Stagg

Councillor Simon Boshier
Councillor Graham Heaney

24. Apologies (AI 1)

There were no apologies for absence.

25. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

26. Portsmouth Rental E-scooter Trial (AI 3)

Felicity Tidbury, Transport Planning Manager, introduced the report. In response to questions officers clarified:

Time spent on the project has been recorded but spend to date is only officer time so there is no additional spending. Any associated costs will be met by Solent Transport, through the Solent Future Transport Zone bid, not Portsmouth City Council.

It has not been decided yet whether to use geo-fencing or not. Neither has it been decided as to whether usage will be restricted on particular routes. Discussions on restrictions will take place with the chosen operator and other key stakeholders.

Paragraph 9.4 refers to communications and marketing information on where e-scooters can be used and where the council can apply restrictions on certain routes.

Allowing e-scooters access to Guildhall Square has yet to be decided but it is an option.

Restrictions and regulations are currently planned to be common across all four sub-projects in the trial (Winchester, Southampton, the Isle of Wight and Portsmouth). Officers are considering the TROs that will be required and are looking to allow e-scooters where bicycles can go, for example, bus lanes, with the opportunity to apply local exclusions and restrictions.

All three members expressed concerns about safety as they had seen e-scooters being used dangerously on roads. Although the principle of the scheme is sound it needs to be fit for purpose and issues need to be resolved now as residents are concerned with illegal use so will think e-scooters are a menace. These are important issues that need to be considered well in advance so that the scheme does not fail.

Councillor Heaney mentioned an e-scooter scheme in Coventry that was suspended due to misuse and asked if the council had enough control. Some people might paint their e-scooters the "approved" colour so they are mistaken for council ones. They could have numbers on them to help with identification. He urged that consultation with the public should be held.

Councillor Boshier noted that if there was geo-fencing there would be no routes on the east side of Portsmouth. He also asked how the scheme would be policed; he suggested education and not just fines. He has noticed a marked increase in e-scooters. The council's scheme requires users to hold a driving licence but the vast majority of people he sees on e-scooters are aged about 12 to 16. He noted that at this stage officers are seeking approval to proceed with the pilot so they can source an operator and then a more detailed technical report can be made in a few months' time.

Officers said there had been 16 tender returns, of which one was non-compliant. They are aware of the issues in Coventry and are engaging with the police and will continue to do so until the launch of the trial.

Councillor Stagg pointed out that users of the council's e-scooters will have to over 17, have a driving licence and register. They will be fined or banned for misuse. Other countries can manage e-scooters well. Hopefully the trial will lead to legislation that can be enforced but for the time being it is a trial. The e-scooters could have bells and lights as they are quiet and difficult to see in the dark. The Isle of Wight is the first sub-project to go ahead so Portsmouth can learn from their experiences.

Councillor Stagg welcomed Richard Lancaster, Project Manager, who is taking over the e-scooters pilot as part of the Solent Future Transport Zone.

- 1.1 **Approved the development of a rental e-scooter trial in Portsmouth;**
- 1.2 **Noted the contents of this paper, and that a further report will be brought back in advance of the launch of a Portsmouth rental e-scooter trial for approval.**

27. Tendered Bus Services - Extension of contracts (AI 4)

Felicity Tidbury, Transport Planning Manager, introduced the report. In response to questions from members officers clarified:

Contracts for the 12, 13 and 14 services started in January 2019; the contract for the 22 service started about 5.5 years ago. The council finances all these

four services and central government finances the new 25 service. There will probably be external grants after 31 March 2021 when contracts end for all the five above mentioned services but the council will issue a tender in April 2021. All the routes will be re-tendered and the results brought back to a decision meeting when there will be an idea of passenger numbers.

The new trial 25 service replaces the 6 and 16 services and joins their routes, especially in the central section of its route. Councillor Stagg had met Marc Reddy, the First Bus Managing Director, to discuss usage. There were 950 and 942 passengers in the first and second weeks respectively. Nearly half were concessionary fares so the service is not paying for itself yet. Councillor Boshier thought it would be useful to have details of bus usage periodically and not necessarily at portfolio meetings, which officers agreed to arrange. He noted the 22 service was well used in Highbury, Cosham and Wymering but not so much around the Farlington Sainsbury's.

Councillor Stagg recommended demanding responses from transport companies where there are no fixed routes as it is difficult for areas not served by bus routes, particularly for elderly people. Councillor Boshier asked if north / south connectivity was considered by bus companies. Although the no.2 service goes from Paulsgrove to Albert Road there is no viable service from Drayton and Farlington. No viable alternatives mean pressure on the Eastern Road for people going to Albert Road or the seafront. The commercial impact of the difficulty of getting to Albert Road from the north of Portsmouth needs to be considered. Councillor Stagg agreed it would be good to have fewer cars on the Eastern Road and issues can be raised with bus companies but people need to use services. For example, 250 people had signed a petition to keep the 15 service but only 50 people had used it. Officers said the Transforming Cities Fund might be able to help.

Extended the current tendered bus service contracts for routes 12, 13, 14 and 22 until 31 March 2021, to coincide with when the current tender ends for the new service 25.

The meeting concluded at 4.45 pm.

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Councillor Lynne Stagg
Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation