

## **CABINET MEMBER FOR TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION**

RECORD OF DECISIONS taken by the Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation, Councillor Lynne Stagg, at her meeting held on Monday, 13 December 2021 at 4.00 pm in Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Portsmouth

### **Present**

Councillor Lynne Stagg

Councillor Simon Boshier  
Councillor Graham Heaney

#### **42. Apologies (AI 1)**

There were no apologies for absence.

#### **43. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)**

There were no declarations of Members' interests.

#### **44. Trial to allow Portsmouth City Council licensed Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) in bus lanes in Portsmouth (AI 3)**

Felicity Tidbury, Transport Development Manager, introduced the report.

Councillor Payter-Harris, present as Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee, welcomed the report and commented that he believed it would be sensible to run the trial for a minimum of 6 months. He noted that the working group included trade representatives and that the Licensing Committee will consider the report at its meeting on Thursday, 16 December 2021.

Written deputations from the Portsmouth Cycle Forum and Walk Ride Waterlooville objecting to the recommendations were then read out in full.

In response to questions, Felicity Tidbury clarified that:

- Several local authorities allow private hire vehicles (PHVs) to use bus lanes, including Reading and Southampton.
- Monitoring locations have not yet been chosen and decisions will be made in conjunction with the working group and Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation.
- The trial is to understand the potential impact of the proposals on existing bus lane users. Stakeholders and interested parties including the Police, cycle forum and bus companies will be consulted during the process.
- It is expected that the trial will start in March 2022.

Wayne Layton, Finance Manager, commented that the projected cost of £110,000 includes legal and project fees of £37,000 and agreed to provide further details and a breakdown to members.

Councillor Payter-Harris provided information in response to questions as follows:

- The number of PHVs fluctuates, has been as high as 1100 but dropped to 920 during the pandemic lockdowns and is now 960 and growing as more drivers return to work.
- Around 200 vehicles will be on the road at any time.
- The Licensing Committee will be reviewing amendments to the Statement of Licensing Policy at its meeting on 16 December and this includes ensuring that drivers undertake mandatory new driver, English and driver competency training and operate as a 'fit and proper' person within the Policy. Poor behaviour or relevant convictions are considered by the Licensing Sub-Committee when necessary.
- Provisions for CCTV in cars aim to protect drivers and passengers.

In response to further questions, Felicity Tidbury clarified that:

- Only PHVs registered in Portsmouth will be included in the scheme and their vehicle registration plates will be included on a whitelist for enforcement purposes.
- PHVs will not be able to pick up or drop off passengers from bus lanes.
- The working group will comprise existing bus lane users and those proposed as part of the trial including Portsmouth Cycle Forum.
- The Cabinet Member for Traffic and Transportation, opposition spokesperson and the Chair and Vice Chair of the Licensing Committee will be included in the process.

Members noted that there had been reports on this matter in 2011 and 2015 but this was the first time a recommendation for a trial and experimental TRO was being considered.

Councillor Heaney commented that he understood the concerns raised in the deputations and that the best way to assess the impact, including on the safety of cyclists, was conduct the trial. He added that all forms of evidence, especially the views of cyclists, must be considered before making a final decision.

Councillor Boshier commented that the trial should run for at least 6 months to cover different seasons and ensure value for money.

Councillor Stagg noted that the pandemic, particularly in the winter months, may impact results and that a longer trial period could help ensure the evidence base is robust. She added that she wants to ensure that buses keep moving and noted that the onus is on PHV drivers to ensure the safety of passengers is not compromised.

Councillor Payter-Harris confirmed that he welcomed the trial, agreed that a period of 6 months would be best and that he and the Chair of the Licensing Committee would be happy to work with the working group.

**DECISIONS: The Cabinet Member:**

- 1) Confirmed the commitment at Full Council on 9 November 2021, to undertake a trial to allow access for Portsmouth City Council licensed Private Hire Vehicles to use bus lanes in Portsmouth;**
- 2) Noted that a working group will be established, which would include transport operators, such as representatives from the local bus companies and Private Hire Vehicle (PHV) operators, and other interested parties to implement and input into the trial;**
- 3) Delegated authority to the Director of Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Traffic and Transportation and the Section 151 Officer to release funding to undertake the monitoring and evaluation of this trial as the details are developed, this will be funded from the Parking Reserve;**
- 4) Noted that a report will be taken to Licensing Committee for further comment and input into the trial.**

The meeting adjourned at 4.50pm and resumed at 5.00pm to allow members to read the Supported Bus Services report which was circulated earlier in the day.

**45. Portsmouth supported bus services - contract extensions (AI 4)**

Felicity Tidbury, Transport Development Manager, introduced the report.

In response to questions, Felicity Tidbury clarified that:

- The costs quoted are the new costs from First for the next 12-months and reflect increases in fuel costs and rider numbers.
- The Transport department has completed the necessary waivers to procure supported bus services for the next 12 months.
- A full procurement process will take place next year.

Simon Bell, Principal Public Transport Officer, confirmed the increase in operating costs was £7,000 and some services including the 22 bus have never been increased.

Wayne Layton, Finance Manager, commented that:

- The costs include £50 per day to cover the Council's Clean Air Zone charge for a full year although this will not be charged once the fleet upgrade has been completed in 2022. He confirmed that commercially run services will not recharge the Clear Air Zone charges back to the Council.
- Bus companies received the Bus Recovery Grant (BRG) funding from the government to make up the shortfall in revenue on commercial bus services and council supported services 12, 13 and 14. In addition the City Council has been allocated LTA BRG funding

to make up the revenue shortfall on service 22. It is also being used to part support service 25. The future of BRG after the 5 April 2022 remains unclear.

- From April 2022, the only other source of Government funding for supporting bus services, outside of transformational funding, will be Bus Service Operator Grant (local and commercial/operator) and the Revenue Support Grant from Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (formerly MHCLG).

Councillor Heaney commented that Council taxpayers should not pay the bus companies for its Clear Air Zone charge. Councillor Boshier agreed and noted that the Council could be paying for these services in three ways - the subsidy for the route, the Clean Air Zone and concessionary bus passes.

Councillor Stagg asked officers to liaise with First to ensure that the bus fleet upgrades are completed as soon as possible.

**DECISION:**

**The Cabinet Member approved the extension of all 5 existing supported bus service contracts from 1st January 2022 up to 31 December 2022.**

**46. Safer Routes to School 2021-22 (considered by Cabinet 30 November 2021) (AI )**

Councillor Heaney sought clarification as to the procedure relating to the decision taken by Cabinet on Safer Routes to School 2021-22 at its meeting on 30 November 2021. He noted that the procedure rules relating to Executive Collective Decision Making are set out in the Constitution and that the procedures should be followed or reviewed.

Councillor Stagg responded that she did not recall why this report was considered by Cabinet rather than at a Cabinet Member meeting and that she would check and respond to Councillor Heaney.

The meeting concluded at 5.20 pm.

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Councillor Lynne Stagg  
Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation