

**THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

**(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)**

<b>Title of meeting:</b>	Licensing Committee
<b>Subject:</b>	Trial to allow Portsmouth City Council licensed Private Hire Vehicles (PHV's) in bus lanes in Portsmouth
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> December 2021
<b>Report by:</b>	Tristan Samuels - Director of Regeneration
<b>Wards affected:</b>	All

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**1. Requested by**

1.1 Report requested by the Licensing Committee.

**2. Purpose**

2.1 The purpose of this report is to detail the commitment made at Full Council on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021, to undertake a minimum 3 month trial to allow Portsmouth City Council licensed Private Hire Vehicles (PHV's) in bus lanes in Portsmouth.

**3. Background**

3.1 Taxis and private hire vehicles are an important mode of transport for many, providing 24-hour on-demand travel across the city. This trial would support this mode transport option, potentially enabling improved journey times through access to the priority lanes.

3.2 As outlined in the recently adopted Portsmouth Transport Strategy 2021-2038, a key part of reducing demand to own private cars will be to provide residents with the confidence that they have alternative transport modes available to make various trips. This will include access to public transport, taxis and private hire vehicles and other sustainable transport options.

3.3 As committed to at Full Council on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021, a trial of Portsmouth City Council (PCC) private hire licensed vehicles in Portsmouth bus lanes will be established.

3.4 A closely monitored trial will provide information and data to understand the potential impacts of other users of bus lanes i.e., bus delays and cycle safety.



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This will be reported back in a report to Traffic and Transportation and the Licensing Committee.

- 3.5 The trial will be undertaken under an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO), which will provide the opportunity for residents and stakeholders to be consulted throughout the duration of the trial. This consultation information will feed into the review of the trial.

### **4. Bus lanes in Portsmouth**

- 4.1 Portsmouth currently has 53 bus lanes in the city, providing a combined total of 9.8 km of dedicated right of way. A plan showing the bus lanes in the Portsmouth administrative boundary is outlined in appendix A.
- 4.2 The vehicle types permitted to use each bus lane are specified in the relevant Traffic Regulation Order (TROs). This currently includes buses, Hackney Carriages (taxis), cyclists and emergency service vehicles travelling under blue lights are permitted to use the bus lanes in Portsmouth, as well as rental e-scooters through the DfT e-scooter trial operating in Portsmouth until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.
- 4.3 Bus lanes are traffic lanes reserved for the use of buses and other authorised vehicles which are to be given priority. They provide a dedicated right of way, enabling buses to avoid queues of traffic and other sources of delay, and address the problem of bus travel times becoming substantially longer and less reliable and attractive than those possible by car.
- 4.4 Under the 1985 Road Traffic Act, the Local Transport Authority is accountable to the Traffic Commissioner for any action that it has taken which negatively impacts on bus punctuality.

### **5. Monitoring**

- 5.1 There are several ways that this trial could be monitored, including the use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras and enumerators. The most viable option to obtain data and determine if other vehicles are using the bus lanes would be to use enumerators at dedicated locations across the city. These locations will be developed with the working group and could be moved during the trial if concerns are reported back during its operation.
- 5.2 To ensure robust information, it is proposed that data is collected before and during the trial. This will provide a baseline of evidence and will be reported back to Traffic & Transportation with the results of the trial.

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5.3 Alongside this monitoring, further information and data will be collected and analysed including:

- Accident data in bus lanes and on the approaches and exits
- Near miss data from cyclists
- Satisfaction - PHV, Hackney drivers, local bus drivers, vulnerable road users (i.e. cyclists) and emergency services under blue lights
- Journey time data - Buses Real Time Information data.

## **6. Other considerations**

### **Bus Gates**

6.1 There are currently two types of bus gates in the city; a detector which is present in the road at the M275, and via a camera at the top end of Commercial Road. There is also a bus gate on Winston Churchill Avenue. These will require reconfiguration to ensure access for PHVs during the trial.

### **Bus links**

6.2 Hackney Carriages are not permitted to use the following bus lanes/links within the Portsmouth administrative boundary, and it is therefore not proposed that PHVs are permitted during the trial

These links include:

- Furze Lane Link
- Cosham Interchange East and West link

### **Signage**

6.3 To clearly indicate which vehicles are permitted to enter the bus lanes during the trial, all current bus lane signage will need to be updated to show "authorised vehicles". An audit will be conducted to establish the exact number of bus lane signs that will require changing.

6.4 All the signs that are used on the highway have to comply with the designs set out in the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016 (TSRGD).

## **7. Next Steps and timeframes**

7.1 Following the trial, a report will be brought back to Traffic & Transportation with the analysis and findings. Time is required ahead of the trial to undertake an audit of the current bus lane signage, produce and install replacement signs at all bus lane locations and develop the ETRO.

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- 7.2 A working group will be arranged to make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for monitoring locations.
- 7.3 The trial is expected to launch in March 2022. This timeframe will be refined in liaison with the working group and Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation.
- 7.4 Details of the trial scheme will be developed, and an application for an ETRO will be made. It is estimated that the trial will launch in the city in March 2022, for a minimum 3-month period.

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Signed by (Director)

**Appendices:**

Appendix A - Bus lanes in Portsmouth

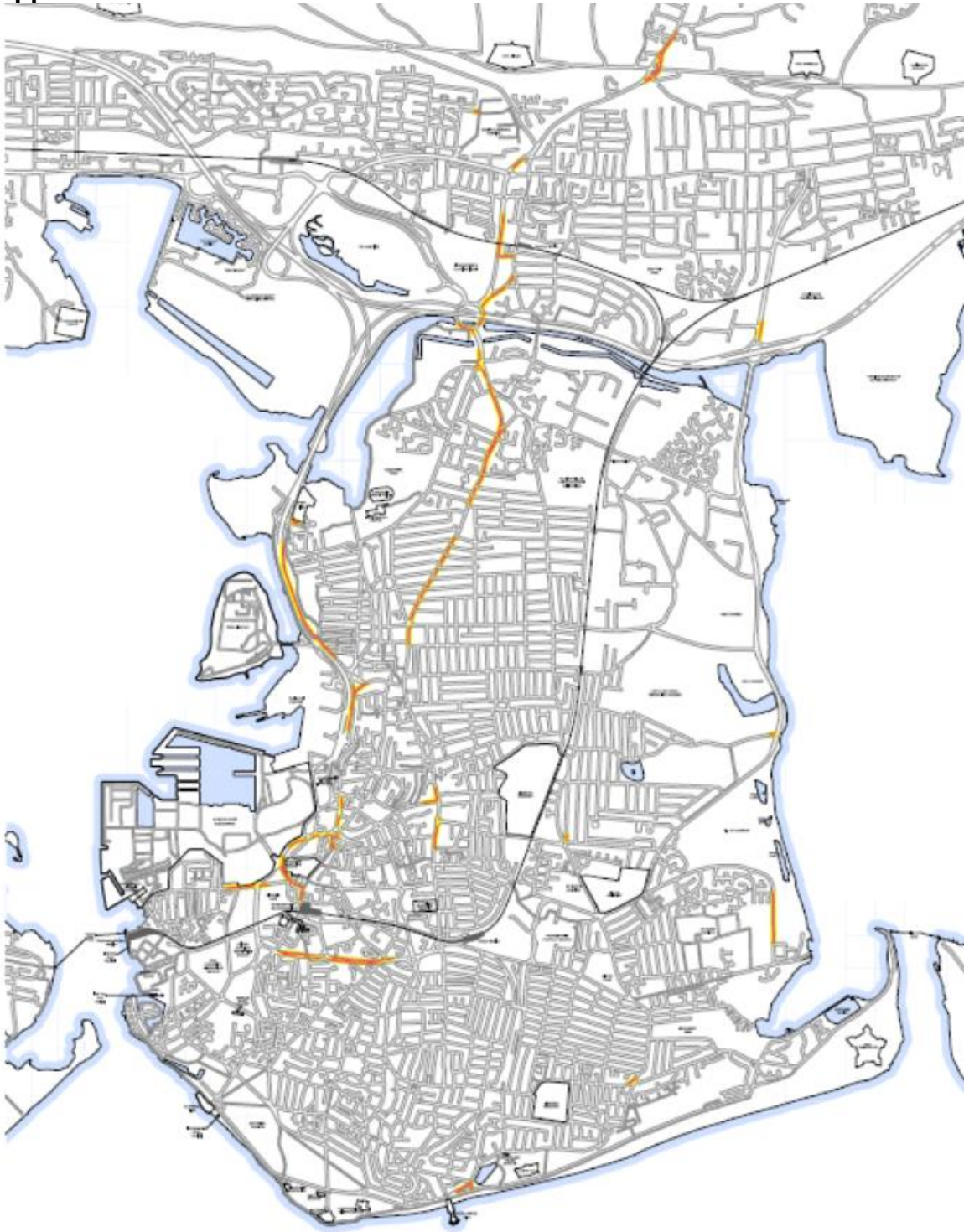
**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

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**Appendix A - bus lanes in Portsmouth**



Scale: A2 1:25,000 A300+ 1:500 (small scale depends on margin)  
A1 1:12,500 A300+ 1:500  
Based on Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 (Scale 1:500) data for 2011. © Crown copyright and geomatics information. Unauthorised reproduction of this map is prohibited under the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.  
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