



Minutes

Name of meeting	SOLENT TRANSPORT JOINT COMMITTEE
Date and Time	WEDNESDAY 20 OCTOBER 2021 COMMENCING AT 4.00 PM
Venue	PORTSMOUTH GUILDHALL EXECUTIVE MEETING ROOM
Present	Cllrs S Galton, P Jordan and L Stagg, J Warwick
Officers Present	Mike Allgrove, Kate Archer, Tim Forrester, Conrad Haigh, Dominic McGrath, Richard Pemberton, Iain Steane and Pam Turton
Apologies	Cllrs R Humby and J Moulton

16. **Introductions and Apologies**

Cllr Stagg welcomed those present and introduced the meeting. Those in attendance introduced themselves.

17. **Minutes and Actions from last meeting**

RESOLVED:

THAT the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2021 were approved as a true record.

18. **Election of Chairman**

Nominations for the Chair were invited. Cllr Stagg was nominated and seconded

RESOLVED:

THAT Cllr Stagg was elected as the new Chair of the Joint Committee

Cllr Stagg took over the chairing of the meeting and called for nominations for Vice Chair, Cllr Jordan was nominated and seconded

RESOLVED:

That Cllr Jordan was elected as Vice Chair of the Joint Committee

19. PfSH Statement of Common Ground update

The consultant project manager for PfSH provided the Committee with a presentation on the Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) which sets out the PfSH authorities are undertaking to help shape future strategic planning in the area. It was acknowledged that there was a shortfall of housing provision in the area, however the forthcoming Joint Strategy will seek to address more than housing development alone. Government Policy requires Local Planning Authorities to plan to meet identified housing needs for their area, and neighbouring authorities where they are unable to meet their own needs, and SOCG is being developed to assist LPAs as part of this process and to meet the Duty to Cooperate.

The current position was summarised which included the need to address:

- Sustainable development
- Climate Emergency
- A review of the 2016 Spatial Position Statement.

An up to date Joint Strategy will be crucial to secure investment in the area.

It was noted that nationally, Local Plans were failing examination due to a number of reasons, including Authorities not working effectively across boundaries, or significant environmental impacts. This is impacting on meeting housing need requirements in a well-managed way. Developments would still go ahead but in a more piece-meal way.

PfSH agreed the programme framework for the Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) in 2019 and it was formalised last year and signed by all Local Authorities involved with PfSH, the SoCG sets out strategic issues and identifies how they will be resolved. The Joint Strategy, currently under development, will set the development strategy for South Hampshire thereby supporting future Local Plans, including in relation to transport.

The process of development of the Joint Strategy was explained, work had been commissioned identifying the need for employment land and floor space. It was noted that guidance from government regarding housing need had been provided, however there was little guidance on employment land/development requirements. The commissioned work to date had identified that there was no shortfall of employment land that needed to be addressed, other than strategic warehousing. Associated work had been commissioned on potential green belt designation for parts of South Hampshire – this is in progress.

The process being undertaken to develop the Joint Strategy has included identification of potential “Strategic Development Opportunity Area” sites. PfSH’s policy of “cities and urban areas first” remained in place, but there was a need for further green field development to accommodate the required quantities of development.

Three strategy options are being considered.

A comparative assessment of options for strategic sites was undertaken by a planning consultant, considering economic, environment, water and climate change impacts.

In parallel a transport workstream looking at transport opportunities and issues is feeding into the sustainability appraisal. This workstream is being undertaken in partnership with Solent Transport.

Recommendations on a single preferred strategy option would be put before PfSH Joint Committee for decision in Autumn 2022.

In response to a Member question, Solent Transport officers stated that work with Network Rail was ongoing to develop the “Solent Connectivity” proposals to the next stage of development at present and that this could support some of the work PfSH are undertaking.

20. Confirmation of Signing of new Joint Legal Agreement

Conrad Haigh, Solent Transport Manager, advised that not all signatures had been received, the Isle of Wight had not yet signed the updated version of the Legal Agreement, the councillor from the Isle of Wight confirmed that he would chase this up.

21. Business Plan update

The Solent Transport Manager presented the business plan update to the committee and highlighted key areas from the report. Recruitment to the Future Transport Zone programme during the pandemic had caused challenges and took longer than expected, but most positions had now been appointed and the team were working well.

Thanks were given to Portsmouth City Council for the work on procurement that they assisted with, which has been key to mobilising some projects.

The Solent Transport Strategic Vision Statement work had slipped although some work had been undertaken so far this year and more work with partners is planned to be undertaken in the later part of the year, although it was believed this may slip further if there are other calls on resources.

The Sub-Regional Transport Model (SRTM) has been used for 13 studies this year so far, and work to carry out interim updates the model to maintain performance/compliance for the next 2 years had gone well which was good news.

Profile raising, marketing and branding was going well and an invite to attend and present at COP 26 had been received from the Department for Transport.

National Highways had previously provided funding for a Travel Demand Management project to try to offset some impacts of the M3 smart motorway scheme roadworks; this project is being progressed and is looking (amongst other things) to deliver two mobility hubs to help improve connections between rail and

other transport modes in locations where rail may offer a good alternative to motorway journeys. A detailed design guide on how to deliver mobility hubs and created a model to look at likely sites for these facilities in the Solent area, two sites had been identified (Cosham and Winchester) and further work was being undertaken.

Concern was raised regarding the call on resources within the team versus delivery of some parts of the work programme, as the Committee had identified a priority to deliver the Future Transport Zone programme this has been prioritised ahead of the Strategic Vision work.

The Committee were advised that the Strategic Vision work would aim to stitch all the key local transport plans and policy documents across the four authorities together. Work had been undertaken with the University of Southampton utilising the National Infrastructure Systems Model (NISMOD), to test interventions identified in various policy documents and the effect these would have on net carbon emissions and traffic levels if applied in Solent, this would enable some prioritisation of potential actions within the Vision Statement.

In response to a question from Cllr Galton regarding future development of the SRTM, it was stated that government required a certain quality/ rigour standard for transport modelling, and the current SRTM, despite being based on relatively old software & data, allows us to meet that standard. There are plans for a major update in 2023 once a stable Post-Covid “new normal” had been established, and that this may provide an opportunity for a “new generation” model platform - some new platforms available however these have not yet been accredited by the DfT. In the meantime, the SRTM model continues to be kept up to date and funding is spent were necessary to maintain short term viability.

It was also noted that work with bus companies regarding incentives to get people back on public transport, some work had been paused during the pandemic. It was a joint piece of work between Solent Transport and Local Authorities to promote incentives.

22. Finance Report

It was noted that the finance report included some HR aspects and the Solent Transport team offered to leave the room, the Committee did not feel this was necessary.

The Finance officer advised that the 2020/21 final budget position had improved since previous reports, a smaller pull on reserves had been used to balance the budget than expected. The 2021/22 budget was fully funded from core contributions which was a fixed rate since 2013. Pay awards had not yet been finalised and were not included in the figures.

Re-charging for time spent on certain activities by core staff was being undertaken to help keep the budget balanced. The report’s recommendations included contract changes from temporary to fixed term contracts for two core staff.

RESOLVED:

- I. THAT the 2020/21 revenue budget final outturn position be noted
- II. THAT the ringfencing and carry forward of the 2020/21 SRTM commissions surplus to support the funding of the SRTM upgrade be approved
- III. THAT the 2021/22 revenue budget forecast outturn position be noted
- IV. THAT the joint Committee approved the proposed staff contract changes from temporary to permanent as set out in paragraph six, agrees that Solent Transport would underwrite any associated liabilities and, in the event funding in the reserve currently set aside for this purpose was insufficient, the partner authorities would meet the balance required pro rata to their respective annual partner contributions.

23. **E-Scooter trials progress**

The FTZ Programme Manager advised that he had recently joined the team and presented the progress report for the Solent e-scooter trials.

Confirmation of authorisation from the DfT for further extending trials until November 2022 had been received recently. The report presented to the Committee focused on the currently committed trials and extension of these up to March 2022); some local Authorities had confirmed extension to March 2022, and others were in process.

The report also identified proposals for allocation of FTZ funding for each LTA to cover work (undertaken to date and forecast) on the planning and delivery of their e-scooter trials up to March 2022.

It was noted that any profits made through the trial schemes are required to be re-invested into complementary projects.

In response to a Member question about potential expansion of the existing trial areas, the DfT had indicated that it was unlikely at this stage that increasing the geographical extent of the trial areas would be permitted due to the time it took to set up required authorisations. However the Solent Transport team will approach the DfT to establish the exact current position.

Solent Transport receives data from the two operators providing shared e-scooters in the area. We are also commissioning an independent review of the data particularly around safety and mode shift and will feed this back to the Committee to help inform future decision making. It was hoped that the review would be completed in early 2022. The Committee believed this was important data especially around mis use of e-scooters that had been reported in some areas.

RESOLVED

THAT the proposed allocation of FTZ funding for each LTA to cover work (undertaken to date and forecast) on the planning and delivery of their e-scooter trials up to March 2022 be approved.

24. FTZ Annual Report

The report was for information. It was noted that University of Southampton had helped to put the report together.

Solent Transport had been asked to attend COP 26 to talk about future transport, including success with the drones during the pandemic and the e-scooter project.

25. FTZ Progress Report

A brief update on the quarterly report was provided to the Committee, key points raised were:

- E-scooter trial project had been positively received and previously increased levels of complaints had now reduced
- MaaS platform provider appointed/contract signed and the app would be launched to the public in early 2022 following testing later in 2021.
- Solent Go enhancements, some of which have been implemented but not actively marketed to users due to Covid and Government instructions to avoid public transport where possible, would be promoted later in the year
- FTZ recruitment had ensured six fixed term staff to the team

The Committee asked questions regarding the Solent Go project and asked how this would be promoted, it was explained that original plans (developed prior to the pandemic) called for implementation and promotion of new Solent Go products earlier, but that Covid had forced a change to plans and the Solent Go improvements will now be actively promoted at the same time as the launch of the MaaS app.

Concern was raised regarding the number of bikes forecast to be available on the cycle hire scheme for Southampton and Portsmouth planned for launch in 2022- officers stated this was subject to the provider of the bikes and their commercial offer; once a procurement process had been completed this would be confirmed.

26. Confirmation of delegated powers to spend/procure for FTZ

At last committee it was agreed that the delegated powers were given to the Solent Transport team, however the word procurement was omitted from the agreement, this was just confirmation that the Committee were happy with that.

27. Any other Business

It was noted that Keith Wilcox was retiring, he had done a lot of work for Solent Transport and the Committee thanked him and wished him well for his retirement.

CHAIRMAN