

Progress update on TECS Scrutiny panel - accessibility of transport network report and response

January 2023

This report provides an update on the Traffic, Environment and Community Safety (TECS) Scrutiny Panel's recommendations arising from a review into the accessibility of Portsmouth's transport network.

Background

The Traffic, Environment and Community Safety (TECS) Panel reviewed the consultation results into the Accessibility of the Transport Network in Portsmouth.

This consultation gave residents, visitors and those working in Portsmouth the opportunity to provide their views on the accessibility of travel within the city, to enable the Council to take the necessary steps to ensure that the transport network is accessible to all. In particular the focus was on:

- Public Transport – bus service, rail network
- Private hire vehicles and hackney carriages
- Highway network – walking and cycling networks
- Road works

A survey was launched on 1st December 2021 and was open until 3rd January 2022. Given that anyone is able to travel around Portsmouth, the survey was open to everyone – residents, visitors and workers.

The survey attracted 1,356 respondents and the results were reported to the TECS Scrutiny panel on 22 March 2022.

The scrutiny panel made 40 recommendations, which are set out in the appendix of this report along with a progress update.

Progress to date

The following section highlights the key progress made for each section of recommendations as of January 2023. Full details of progress to date can be found in the appendix.

Possible solutions to support improvements to bus affordability

and,

Possible solutions to support improvements to routes, timings and location of bus stops.

Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding has now been confirmed and an Enhanced Partnership with bus operators entered into. This will see the introduction of improved ticketing and wider roll out of real time information.

The Solent Future Transport Zone have now launched the Breeze, mobility as a service (MaaS) app. This will see bus operators fully integrated during 2023.

The approved BSIP funding will also be able to provide enhancements to existing supported services and extra services for groups and areas which are not well served. Through the BSIP undertake a range of priority measures such as bus lanes and smart signals and improved access to bus stops for both passengers and buses.

Possible solutions to getting around the station and accessibility of trains and,

Possible solutions to improve the reliability of train timings

The Continual Modular Strategic Plan (CMSP) has been renamed Solent Connectivity. The proposals are now proceeding to Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) stage, with Network Rail being funded by Department for Transport (DfT) to undertake this. The council, together with the other Solent local transport authorities (LTAs), will participate in this process.

Possible solutions to ordering and booking taxis.

There is ongoing communication and engagement with the taxi trade. 30 PCC licensed wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs) have been replaced with clean air zone compliant WAVS during 2021 and 2022, further applications to the clean air fund are expected before it closes in February 2023.

Possible solutions to the condition of pavement surfaces

and,

Possible solutions to being able to travel along the pavement with ease.

A new feasibility process was approved at the meeting of the Cabinet Member for T&T in December 2022 which ensures all new schemes engage with active travel officers and consider any synergies or other improvements that could be included as part of the works.

We continue to respond to and investigate resident and stakeholder correspondence and take appropriate action to improve problem sites. The PFI team are investigating specific roads identified through the survey. We are awaiting government action on providing greater powers to deal with footway parking.

Possible solutions to being able to cross roads and have clear lines of sight.

The walking and cycling map is in the process of being updated and can consider the inclusion of crossing points.

Funding for access for people with disabilities has been included within the proposed 2023/24 LTP Capital Budget.

The University of Portsmouth have been engaged with regarding the Breeze (MaaS) app and regular liaison meetings are held to aid information for students who are new to the city.

Possible solutions to cycle lane safety

and,

Possible solutions to cycle diversions when roadworks taking place.

The pedestrian near-miss reporting tool has been launched.

New cycle infrastructure designs continue to take account of accessibility for disabled users and implement the guidance of LTN 1/20 where possible.

Regulations are followed and appropriate stakeholder engagement is undertaken on roadwork diversions. The requirement levels are exceeded for signage when cycle lanes are closed.

Further considerations to support improvements to accessibility of transport

The new feasibility process will ensure a greater level of engagement with disability groups.

BSIP funding is now confirmed and could potentially include improved information facilities at interchanges.

A Wayfinding Strategy will be developed as part of the walking and cycling strategy which will be brought forward in the first period of the LTP.

Multi-modal parking will be considered through the Parking Strategy which is planned to be consulted on in 2023.

Sites where regular pavement usage occurs will be assessed to understand why it is taking place at that site. Often people cycle on the pavement as there is a lack of perceived safety regarding other options This would require budget and feasibility studies as sites are identified.

Next steps

We will continue delivering the recommendations set out by the TECS Scrutiny panel with oversight and co-ordination of the actions to be led by the Transport Planning team, who will provide further progress updates.