

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)

Title of meeting:	Traffic and Transportation Cabinet Decision Meeting
Date of meeting:	23 rd March 2023
Subject:	Portsmouth Bus Service Improvement Plan: Passenger Charter
Report by:	Tristan Samuels - Director of Regeneration
Report Author:	Paul Walker - National Bus Strategy Delivery Manager
Wards affected:	All
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	No

1. Requested by

- 1.1 Report requested by the Cabinet Member for Traffic and Transportation.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the adoption of the Portsmouth Bus Passenger Charter as part of the Enhanced Bus Partnership.

3. Background

- 3.1 In March 2021 the Government announced a new National Bus Strategy called Bus Back Better (BBB). As part of this, and to receive future transport funding, Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) had to publish a Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and form an Enhanced Partnership (EP) with bus operators to deliver the desired and stated improvements.
- 3.2 The Portsmouth Enhanced Partnership supports Portsmouth City Council's Imagine Portsmouth, which sets out a new city vision for Portsmouth's future by 2040. The Portsmouth EP will respond to the outcomes of the Imagine Portsmouth work, particularly about creating a city with easy travel and creating a green city.

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- 3.3 In January 2023 the DfT confirmed year 1 funding with indicative allocations for years 2 and 3. In total the programme equates to £48.3m over 3 years (April 2022 – March 2025) split between £33.8m for capital measures and £14.5m for revenue interventions.
- 3.4 Portsmouth's BSIP delivery programme was aligned to DfT priorities and focussed on residents' responses to make bus travel quicker, more reliable, and more affordable as well as getting residents where they want to go at the times that they wish to travel and in a short time. Over the last few months some initiatives have commenced, including early morning and late Friday and Saturday night services funded along with a free fares Sunday initiative for March 2023. Christmas Day services were also provided for the first time - all in partnership with bus operators First and Stagecoach.
- 3.5 One element highlighted for early delivery within the BSIP was the development of a Passenger Charter, which is outlined in section 4 of this report.

4. The Bus Passenger Charter:

- 4.1. As outlined in the Portsmouth Transport Strategy (LTP4)¹ Portsmouth City Council's aim is to transform public transport and provide the best possible bus services in Portsmouth as part of the partnership between bus operators and the City Council.
- 4.2 The Bus Passenger Charter sets out what can be expected by passengers when using all local bus services that operate across Portsmouth. These include the services provided by the following bus operators:
- First Bus South (including Star, Eclipse, Solent Ranger & Solent services)
 - Stagecoach South (including Coastliner 700 services)
- 4.3 The Bus Passenger Charter covers elements of service provision that are the responsibility of Portsmouth City Council, which is the Local Transport Authority, including bus stops as well as the level of service provision and customer service to be expected on board.
- 4.4 The Charter reflects the agreement contained within the Enhanced Bus Partnership and is expected to be valid between April 2023 and March 2025 with annual review.
- 4.5 The Charter covers the following principal areas:
- Services and information including:
 - A network of regular bus services designed to connect people to places according to demand, developed in partnership between the Local

¹ [Portsmouth Transport Strategy 2021-2038](#)

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- Transport Authority and bus operators using data gained from operators and the public through regular engagement;
- Standards for bus stops and shelters including timetable information, QR codes and real time information.
- Reliability including:
 - Buses normally running no more than one minute early or five minutes late;
 - Being kept informed on delays;
 - If the last bus on each service does not operate, bus operators will pay for a taxi for anyone left behind.
- On the Bus including:
 - An increased range of tickets;
 - Audio and visual Information on next stop & CCTV;
 - Details of who to contact if things go wrong;
 - Customer service training.
- Improving Bus Services in Portsmouth including:
 - Readily available information about the progress we are making to improve bus services through regular updates on social media, real time information signs and publications.

5. Stakeholders:

- 5.1 The Portsmouth BSIP and principles of the Passenger Charter has been subject to formal bus operator and public consultation in the Autumn of 2022.
- 5.2 The Portsmouth BSIP was developed following a public survey of over 1,100 residents and 32 local business in summer 2021 and in 2022, over 900 Portsmouth residents took part in the National Highways and Transport survey where the city was ranked joint second amongst 111 participating authorities. Public transport feedback is being analysed to inform the next steps of the BSIP. Portsmouth City Council will be taking part in the Transport Focus 'Your Bus Journey' starting the Spring, with this feedback and data being reviewed and reported to the Portsmouth Enhanced Partnership and included within the ongoing BSIP scheme development.
- 5.4 The Charter will be reviewed and where necessary revised each year as directed by the Enhanced Partnership Board. In addition to regular public consultation there is the provision for an Enhanced Partnership stakeholder group to put forward to the EP Board any recommendations for amendments to the Charter.

6. Next Steps:

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- 6.1 The Charter will be signed by operators and City Council and will come into force on 1st April 2023. A communications plan will be developed jointly with operators to advertise the charter including details available on all buses by the early summer.

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Signed by: Tristan Samuels, Director of Regeneration

Appendices:

Appendix A - Portsmouth Bus Passenger Charter

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:

Title of document	Location
Local Transport Plan 4	https://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/74.633-Local-Transport-Plan-2021-Final-Accessible.pdf
Portsmouth Bus Service Improvement Plan & Scheme	https://travel.portsmouth.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/Portsmouth-Enhanced-Partnership-FINAL-December-2022-301122.pdf