

**Title of meeting:** Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation decision meeting

**Date of meeting:** 23 March 2023

**Subject:** Review of Summer 2022 additional bus services and recommendations for Summer 2023 additional bus services

**Report by:** Tristan Samuels, Director of Regeneration

**Report author:** Simon Bell, Principal Public Transport Officer

**Wards affected:** Central Southsea, Charles Dickens, Eastney and Craneswater, Milton, Nelson, St Jude and St Thomas.

**Key decision:** No

**Full Council decision:** No

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**1. Purpose of report**

The purpose of this report is to review the bus services supported by Portsmouth City Council in summer 2022/23 and to make recommendations for any summer bus services in 2023/24.

**2. Recommendations**

**It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Traffic and Transportation:**

- 2.1 Delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Transport to undertake the procurement process and the award of a contract for a park and ride service (known as Southsea PR3), to operate in the July/August summer holidays, and on weekends in May, June and September, to be funded from the parking reserve, subject to value for money after consultation with the Section 151 Officer;**
- 2.2 Notes the registration of the commercial open top seafront Service 50 between The Hard and South Parade Pier between 28 May and 30 September 2023;**

**2.3 Notes no additional journeys on the Service 25 are to be operated in summer 2023.**

**3. Background**

- 3.1 The travel patterns to and around Portsmouth vary considerably in the summer with increased flows from tourists and families to destinations including the seafront and Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. This can create traffic congestion and pressure on parking facilities across the city, and negatively impact air quality in the Clean Air Zone (CAZ).
- 3.2 The council is keen to develop sustainable travel options to address congestion and parking pressures on the seafront, establishing reliable alternatives to the private car, building on the work of previous summer seasons to provide access to popular locations through bus-based travel.
- 3.3 The Portsmouth Transport Strategy (Local Transport Plan 4) includes a strategic objective of "transform public transport". Policy D of the transport strategy details aspirations for the park and ride service, including extensions to key destinations such as the seafront. The Portsmouth Transport Strategy will be supported by detailed modal strategies, such as the emerging parking strategy which will support reduction in congestion and further improve air quality in the city.
- 3.4 The council has been successful in externally funded programmes including the [Portsmouth Bus Service Improvement Plan](#) and South East Hampshire Rapid Transit which contain many interventions to improve the local bus network. These have [targets](#) to increase patronage, passenger satisfaction, reliability and to reduce journey time. At the Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation meeting in January 2023 the council has approved the feasibility study of a [Southsea Transport Hub](#) to ensure improved connectivity to the seafront area.
- 3.5 To supplement the capital measures in the programmes above, the council decided to use the Transport Act 1985 to procure tendered bus routes. These additional services were to support access to the seafront and generate financial activity for the city. Together, these additional seasonal services in 2022 created an additional 13,413 sustainable bus journeys. These services in 2022 included:
- 3.6 Service 50: An open top bus service between The Hard and South Parade Pier which operated every day during the school summer holidays in 2022. [Open top bus services](#) have become a popular feature of the British seaside in recent years with Portsmouth also having a commercial service in 2021 operating between Clarence pier and Eastney (Henderson Rd) by Aldermaston Coaches.

- 3.7 In 2022 First Bus provided the service between The Hard Interchange and South Parade Pier operated under contract to the council. This ran for 40 days during the school summer holidays and was used by 5,209 passengers, which had a subsidy (after fares income) of £1.82 per passenger trip. This service had a fare of £5 for a day ticket, with reductions for groups and concessionary fare pass holders, but did not accept concessionary passes for free travel. The service was operated as detailed in Appendix A.
- 3.8 Service PR3: Operated between Portsmouth Park & Ride and the D-Day Story running every day in the school summer holidays, on a thirty-minute frequency between 09:00 and 18:00. The service had the same fares to the main park and ride (PR1) service with tickets available at site, charged at £4 for up to five passengers in one vehicle, but in addition PR3 passengers could purchase tickets on the bus fares for journeys between the city centre and seafront. The service ran for 40 days and was used by 7,391 passengers avoiding an estimated 2,398 car journeys. This required a subsidy of £4.52 per passenger. The service was operated as detailed in Appendix B.
- 3.9 An on-bus passenger survey was carried out during the operation of the Southsea park and ride in summer 2022. The survey results shown in Appendix F showed that 86% of passengers travelled to and from the Southsea seafront area, supporting the visitor economy. The survey showed that 56% of passengers travelling past the city centre continued to Southsea, with 41% going to Clarence Pier.
- 3.10 Service 25: This service was introduced in August 2020 and runs all year round for both residents and visitors linking The Hard, Old Portsmouth, Southsea and the Hayling Ferry. Additional evening journeys were provided between 24 July and 25 September 2022 on the regular route to enable connections to later summer journeys on the Eastney to Hayling Island Ferry. The service operated additional journeys as detailed in Appendix C.
- 3.11 This operated with regular fares and acceptance of concessionary passes. The service operated for 63 days, and 543 passengers were carried on the extra journeys. This equated to a subsidy of £11.02 per passenger.
- 3.12 The net cost overall of all summer services, after fares taken, was £48,904 which generated 13,413 passenger journeys at a passenger subsidy of £3.65 compared to the equivalent cost per passenger for tendered bus services of £1.38 (2021/2 prices). All the summer services were funded via the Parking Reserve in 2022 following Cabinet Member approval on the 22 February 2022. The full costs for each service is contained within Appendix E of this report.
- 3.13 The communications team constructed a campaign to promote the new services in a relatively short timeframe. This campaign was tagged as the "bus

to the beach" under the "Visit Portsmouth" branding. It used social media, e-bulletin assets, and posters. Real Time Information, branded bus stops and gantry signage asking people to use park and ride. The total cost of the marketing campaign was £2,790 with the funding coming from the parking reserve budget and is included in the costs shown for the open top service as this attracted most of the costs for bus stop flags and timetables.

#### **4. Review of the 2022 services with learnings for 2023**

- 4.1 The council reviewed all the three services in the autumn of 2022 and concluded that given the short lead time to the introduction of services the Service 50 and PR3 performed relatively well for newly introduced bus routes. The council propose to use the learnings from the summer 2022 operation to develop a summer 2023 offer, further refining the operations and bringing greater value for money and wider benefits to the city.
- 4.2 The review of the PR3 service highlighted that people understood how to use the service purchasing tickets from the ticket machine at Tipner, with only occasional use of prepaid card tickets used for the PR1. Most journeys were between the park & ride site and D Day experience, but with a minority of those passengers travelling to and from Clarence Pier. The last journey of the day at 18:30 performed relatively well, whereas the first journey at 09:35 had low patronage. It would therefore be proposed for the service to start and finish an hour later in future. It is anticipated that the contract value for these services is between £30,000-60,000 and quotations will be obtained as part of the tender exercise
- 4.3 The review of Service 50 concluded it had performed satisfactorily in operational and financial terms in summer 2022. First Solent approached the council in December 2022 with a proposal to run a similar Southsea open top bus service for an extended season on a commercial basis. The proposal has been registered by First Solent to commence operation as detailed in Appendix F. As seasonal services are outside the normal concessionary fares scheme the operator would not be re-imbursed for concessionary pass use. Holders of Concessionary Passes would have to pay the full adult fare of £7:00 per single ticket unless the operator chose to offer a discount.
- 4.4 The council also reviewed the additional summer journeys which ran on Service 25 between 23 July and 26 September 2022. These additional journeys performed poorly in financial and passenger numbers compared to daytime local bus tendered services. Due to the low patronage the council would not propose to repeat the same timetable for evening services on the 25 designed primarily to connect with the Hayling Ferry additional summer journeys.

## 5. Reasons for recommendations

- 5.1 **Sustainable access to the seafront.** These services support the visitor economy by providing sustainable access to the seafront. This assists many of the objectives in the PCC [Seafront Masterplan](#) (2021), but specifically Objective 10 which states "to better accommodate other travel modes as attractive alternatives".
- 5.2 **Transport Policy objectives.** These services support the strategic objectives in the [Portsmouth Transport Strategy](#) to "deliver cleaner air" and "transform public transport". These services will promote the use of park & ride and bus travel as alternatives to those visitors able to leave their private cars at home.
- 5.3 **Establish sustainable transport routes to mitigate the impact of coastal defence works.** The council are a partner in a [coastal defence programme](#), which will involve a reduction in parking capacity at the seafront from spring 2024. The services outlined above will help offset the effect of a reduction on road and parking space capacity during the construction and completion of highways works.
- 5.4 **Finance.** Experience from summer 2022 enables better understanding of service demand which is hoped to result in a lower level of expenditure in return for a higher level of patronage. The approval of the programme early in the year will allow for early publicity which will drive patronage and deliver a lower cost package for summer 2023.

## 6. Integrated Impact Assessment

- 6.1 An Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) has been undertaken and is attached in Appendix G. The IIA has identified that there are no impacts on the level of service provided to users.

## 7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Council has a duty under the Transport Act 1985 ("TA") "to secure the provision of such public passenger transport services as the Council consider it appropriate to secure to meet any public transport requirements within the city which would not in their view be met apart from any action taken by them for that purpose".
- 7.2 To secure the duty, the Council has the power to enter into agreements for the provision of service subsidies, but this is limited to where the service would

otherwise not be provided to a particular standard but for the subsidy.  
"Standard" in this instance meaning the frequency or timing of the service, the days or times of day the service is provided and the vehicles used to provide the service.

- 7.3 The exercise of the power by the Council is conditional on a competitive tender being undertaken, which must have consideration for a "combination or economy, efficiency and effectiveness" and "the reduction or limitation or traffic congestion, noise or air pollution". These agreements must not exceed 8 years.

#### Procurement requirements and contract procedure rules

- 7.4 These services are below the relevant threshold for services under the Public Contract Regulations 2015, however general procurement principles of transparency, equal treatment and non-discrimination should still be complied with.
- 7.5 It is understood that the contract value for these services is between £30,000-60,000 and quotations will be obtained as part of the tender exercise. The Council's contract procedure rules ("CPRs") state the following rules which must be followed for Medium Value Contracts (£5,000-£100,000):
- 7.5.1 At least three written quotations must be obtained from appropriately qualified and competent bidders via the Council's eSourcing solution.
- 7.5.2 In seeking quotations, an audit trail must be maintained and recorded on the Council's eSourcing solution. Quotations must be sought via the Council's eSourcing solution. The Council's standard procurement documentation must be used.
- 7.5.3 Where the Authorised Officer decides to invite quotations via advertised process via publication to the unrestricted area of the Council's eSourcing solution the opportunity must also be advertised on Central Government's Contracts Finder.
- 7.5.4 If no quotations are sought, approval from the relevant Service Director and any other officers relevant to the decision making process must be obtained. A waiver must be also be completed, approved and filed on the Council's eSourcing solution.

#### **8. Director of Finance comments**

- 8.1 The Park and Ride Service runs at a deficit which is subsidised from the Parking Reserve. The ridership numbers remain low and have not recovered

since the pandemic. Consequently, the income from users of the service does not cover the operating costs and the site running costs.

- 8.2 The cost of the additional Summer Services is expected to be in the region of £60,000 and will be met from the Parking Reserve. A higher level of patronage will reduce this cost.

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

<b>Title of document</b>	<b>Location</b>
Traffic & Transportation meeting 8 December 2022	<a href="#">Supported Bus Services paper from December 2022</a>
Traffic & Transportation meeting 19 January 2023	<a href="#">Southsea Travel Hub</a>
Portsmouth Economic Development and Regeneration Plan	<a href="#">The Portsmouth Economic Development and Regeneration Strategy</a>
Portsmouth Bus Service Improvement Plan 2022	<a href="#">Portsmouth BSIP</a>
Portsmouth Transport Strategy 2021 - 2038	<a href="#">Local Transport Plan</a>
PCC Seafront Masterplan 2021	<a href="#">Seafront Masterplan</a>

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by ..... on .....

.....  
Signed by: Tristan Samuels, Director of Regeneration

### **Appendices**

**Appendix A - Details of Service 50 operation 2022**

**Appendix B - Details of PR3 operation 2022**

**Appendix C - Details of Service 25 operation 2022**

**Appendix D - Seasonal bus service 2022 costs**

**Appendix E - Service 50 registration 2023**

**Appendix F - Survey of service PR3 operation 2022**

**Appendix G - Integrated Impact Assessment**

**Appendix A - Service 50 Registration for Summer 2022.**



**Portsmouth The Hard/Gunwharf - Clarence Pier - Southsea, South Parade Pier**

via Old Portsmouth, Southsea Sea Front and D-Day Story

**Daily Service from Saturday 23 July 2022 to Wednesday 31 August 2022 inclusive**

Portsmouth The Hard Interchange (stand N)	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00
Old Portsmouth, St Thomas Cathedral	09:04	10:04	11:04	12:04	13:04	14:04	15:04	16:04
Clarence Pier (stand C) arr	09:07	10:07	11:07	12:07	13:07	14:07	15:07	16:07
Clarence Pier (stand C) dep	09:12	10:12	11:12	12:12	13:12	14:12	15:12	16:12
D-Day Story/Southsea Castle	09:17	10:17	11:17	12:17	13:17	14:17	15:17	16:17
Southsea, South Parade Pier	09:24	10:24	11:24	12:24	13:24	14:24	15:24	16:24
Southsea, South Parade Pier (stand C)	09:30	10:30	11:30	12:30	13:30	14:30	15:30	16:30
D Day Story/Southsea Castle	09:37	10:37	11:37	12:37	13:37	14:37	15:37	16:37
Clarence Pier (stand C) arr	09:42	10:42	11:42	12:42	13:42	14:42	15:42	16:42
Clarence Pier (stand C) dep	09:47	10:47	11:47	12:47	13:47	14:47	15:47	16:47
Old Portsmouth, St Thomas Cathedral	09:50	10:50	11:50	12:50	13:50	14:50	15:50	16:50
Portsmouth The Hard Interchange	09:55	10:55	11:55	12:55	13:55	14:55	15:55	16:50

Service operated under contract to Portsmouth City Council

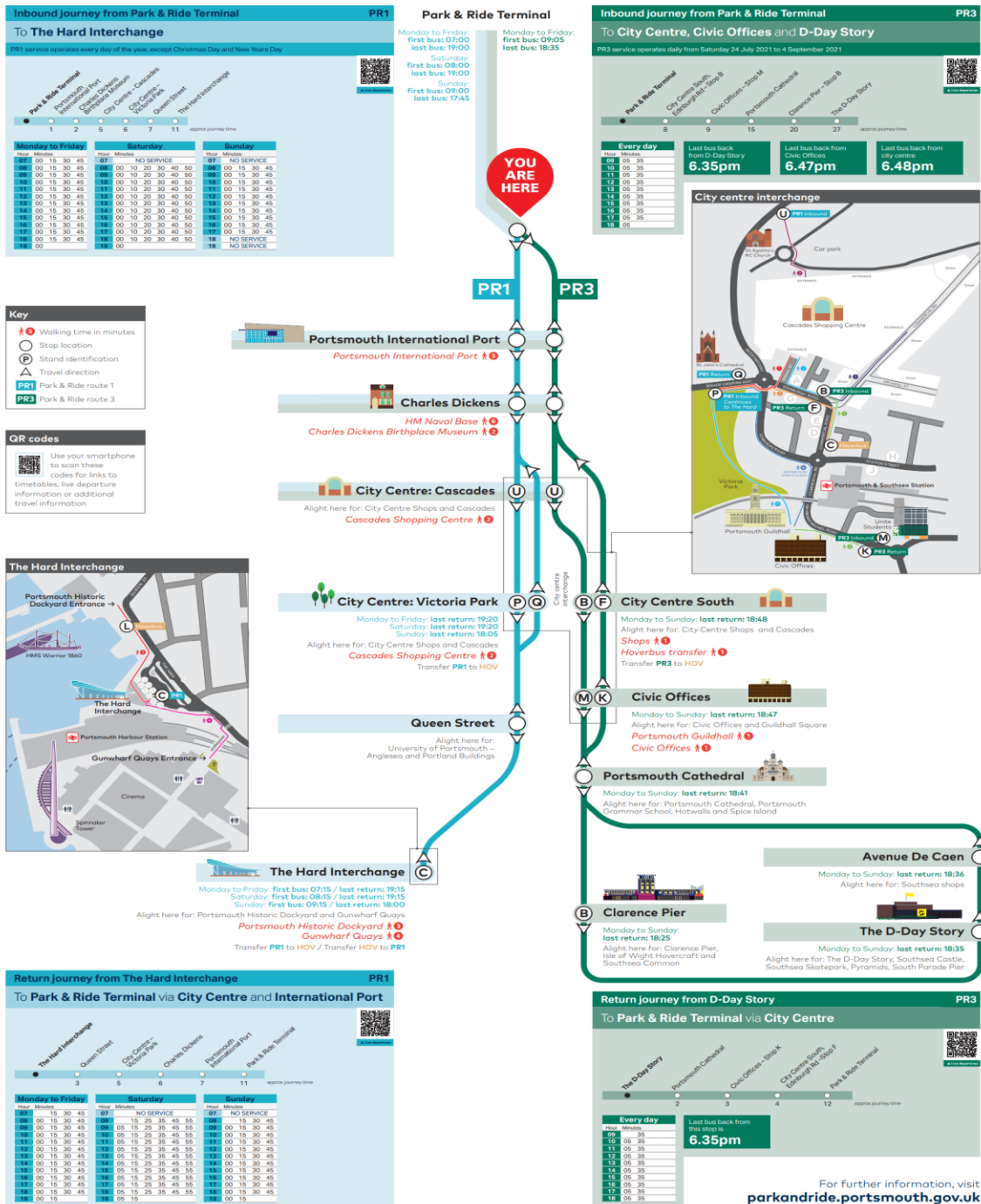
This service is normally operated by an open-top bus, but may be substituted by a standard bus if the weather is poor.



## Appendix B - Details of service PR3 Summer 2022.



# Park & Ride Terminal



## Appendix C - Details of Service 25 operation 2022.



### The Hard - Southsea - Eastney (Hayling Ferry)

via Old Portsmouth, Clarence Pier, Southsea Shops, Waverley Road, Devonshire Square, Bransbury Park

#### Monday to Saturdays (not Public Holidays)

The Hard/Gunwharf (stand M)	07:42	09:15	10:00	10:45	11:30	12:15	13:00	13:45	14:30	15:15	17:05	19:18
Old Portsmouth Seager's Court	07:49	09:22	10:07	10:52	11:37	12:22	13:07	13:52	14:37	15:22	17:12	19:25
Clarence Pier	07:54	09:27	10:12	10:57	11:42	12:27	13:12	13:57	14:42	15:27	17:17	19:30
Southsea Shops	07:58	09:31	10:16	11:01	11:46	12:31	13:16	14:01	14:46	15:31	17:21	19:34
Albert Road Traffic Lights	08:04	09:37	10:22	11:07	11:52	12:37	13:22	14:07	14:52	15:37	17:27	19:40
Devonshire Square	08:08	09:41	10:26	11:11	11:56	12:41	13:26	14:11	14:56	15:41	17:31	19:44
Bransbury Park	08:12	09:45	10:30	11:15	12:00	12:45	13:30	14:15	15:00	15:45	17:35	19:48
Eastney Lumdsen Road	08:16	09:49	10:34	11:19	12:04	12:49	13:34	14:19	15:04	15:49	17:39	19:52
Hayling Ferry	08:21	09:54	10:39	11:24	12:09	12:54	13:39	14:24	15:09	15:54	17:44	19:57
Hayling Ferry	07:00	08:30	10:02	10:47	11:32	12:17	13:02	13:47	14:32	16:02	18:05	20:05
Eastney Fort Cumberland Road	07:04	08:34	10:06	10:51	11:36	12:21	13:06	13:51	14:36	16:06	18:09	20:09
Bransbury Park	07:08	08:38	10:10	10:55	11:40	12:25	13:10	13:55	14:40	16:10	18:13	20:13
Devonshire Square	07:12	08:42	10:14	10:59	11:44	12:29	13:14	13:59	14:44	16:14	18:17	20:17
Albert Road Traffic Lights	07:16	08:46	10:18	11:03	11:48	12:33	13:18	14:03	14:48	16:18	18:21	20:21
Southsea Shops	07:22	08:52	10:24	11:09	11:54	12:39	13:24	14:09	14:54	16:24	18:27	20:27
Clarence Pier	07:26	08:56	10:28	11:13	11:58	12:43	13:28	14:13	14:58	16:28	18:31	20:31
Old Portsmouth Seager's Court	07:31	09:01	10:33	11:18	12:03	12:48	13:33	14:18	15:03	16:33	18:36	20:36
The Hard/Gunwharf (stand N)	07:38	09:08	10:40	11:25	12:10	12:55	13:40	14:25	15:10	16:40	18:43	20:43

#### Sundays and Public Holidays

The Hard/Gunwharf (stand M)	09:45	11:15	12:45	14:15	15:45	17:15	19:18	
Old Portsmouth Seager's Court	09:52	11:22	12:52	14:22	15:52	17:22	19:25	
Clarence Pier	09:57	11:27	12:57	14:27	15:57	17:27	19:30	
Southsea Shops	10:01	11:31	13:01	14:31	16:01	17:31	19:34	
Albert Road Traffic Lights	10:07	11:37	13:07	14:37	16:07	17:37	19:40	
Devonshire Square	10:11	11:41	13:11	14:41	16:11	17:41	19:44	
Bransbury Park	10:15	11:45	13:15	14:45	16:15	17:45	19:48	
Eastney Lumdsen Road	10:19	11:49	13:19	14:49	16:19	17:49	19:52	
Hayling Ferry	10:24	11:54	13:24	14:54	16:24	17:54	19:57	
Hayling Ferry	09:00	10:30	12:00	13:30	15:00	16:30	18:05	20:05
Eastney Fort Cumberland Road	09:04	10:34	12:04	13:34	15:04	16:34	18:09	20:09
Bransbury Park	09:08	10:38	12:08	13:38	15:08	16:38	18:13	20:13
Devonshire Square	09:12	10:42	12:12	13:42	15:12	16:42	18:17	20:17
Albert Road Traffic Lights	09:16	10:46	12:16	13:46	15:16	16:46	18:21	20:21
Southsea Shops	09:22	10:52	12:22	13:52	15:22	16:52	18:27	20:27
Clarence Pier	09:26	10:56	12:26	13:56	15:26	16:56	18:31	20:31
Old Portsmouth Seager's Court	09:31	11:01	12:31	14:01	15:31	17:01	18:36	20:36
The Hard/Gunwharf (stand N)	09:38	11:08	12:38	14:08	15:38	17:08	18:43	20:43

Operates between 24 July 2022 and 24 September 2022 inclusive

**hello!**

We're proud to be operating your service 25 which now features additional evening journeys for the warm summer evenings from 24 July 2022, financially supported by Portsmouth City Council.

We look forward to welcoming you onboard our buses.

You can keep in touch with us via the following websites.

- [firstbus.co.uk/portsmouth](https://firstbus.co.uk/portsmouth)
- search **FirstSolent**
- follow **@FirstPortsmouth**



## Appendix D - Seasonal bus service 2022 costs.

Route	PR3	Southsea Coaster	25 Evening services	Total summer services	Other supported services
Operating days	40	40	63		6 months
Passenger-trips	7,391	5,209	543	13,143	78,040
Gross cost	£34,011	£22,750*	£5,985	£64,094	£107,940
Revenue	£580	£13,262	-	£18,701	-
Net cost	£33,431	£9,488	£5,985	£45,393	£107,940
Cost/trip	£4.52	£1.82	£11.02	£3.65	£1.38

\*Includes bus stop flags and timetable displays and publicity costs.



Appendix E - Registration of Service 50 commencing 28/05/23.

Portsmouth The Hard/Gunwharf - Clarence Pier - Southsea, South Parade Pier via Old Portsmouth, Southsea Sea Front and D-Day Story																	Southsea Coaster
DAILY SERVICE																	
Sunday 28 May 2023 to Saturday 30 September 2023 inclusive																	
Portsmouth The Hard Interchange (stand N)	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00								
Old Portsmouth, St Thomas Cathedral	09:04	10:04	11:04	12:04	13:04	14:04	15:04	16:04	17:04								
Old Portsmouth Broad Street	09:07	10:07	11:07	12:07	13:07	14:07	15:07	16:07	17:07								
Clarence Pier (stand C)	09:13	10:13	11:13	12:13	13:13	14:13	15:13	16:13	17:13								
D-Day Story/Southsea Castle	09:17	10:17	11:17	12:17	13:17	14:17	15:17	16:17	17:17								
Southsea, South Parade Pier	09:22	10:22	11:22	12:22	13:22	14:22	15:22	16:22	17:22								
Southsea, South Parade Pier (stand C)	09:25	10:25	11:25	12:25	13:25	14:25	15:25	16:25	17:25								
D Day Story/Southsea Castle	09:30	10:30	11:30	12:30	13:30	14:30	15:30	16:30	17:30								
Clarence Pier (stand C)	09:34	10:34	11:34	12:34	13:34	14:34	15:34	16:34	17:34								
Old Portsmouth Broad Street	09:41	10:41	11:41	12:41	13:41	14:41	15:41	16:41	17:41								
Old Portsmouth, St Thomas Cathedral	09:45	10:45	11:45	12:45	13:45	14:45	15:45	16:45	17:45								
Portsmouth The Hard Interchange	09:49	10:49	11:49	12:49	13:49	14:49	15:49	16:49	17:49								

This service is normally operated by an open-top bus, but may be substituted by a standard bus if the weather is poor.

## Appendix F - Survey of service PR3 operation 2022.

### Route PR3 Passenger census results

Date	Recorded passengers	Travelling between Tipner and D Day experience	% Travelling between Tipner and D Day experience	Travelling between P&R and Clarence Pier	% Travelling between P&R and Clarence Pier	Children	% Children
11/08/2022	86	63	73%	20	23%		
23/08/2022	55	23	42%	3	5%	25	45%
25/08/2022	17	9	53%	2	12%	7	41%
27/08/2022	91	56	62%	56	62%	15	16%
28/08/2022	90	69	77%	69	77%	14	16%
30/08/2022	78	54	69%	22	28%	26	33%
Total	417	274	66%	172	41%	87	26%