

Meeting Title:	Southampton Enhanced Partnership Board – Notes of Meeting agreed at the January EP Board
Date:	22 October 2024
Time:	10:00am-12:00pm
Location:	Boardroom, Bluestar HQ, Empress Road, Southampton
<u>Invitees:</u>	Cllr Eamonn Keogh, SCC Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport (Chair); Pete Boustred, SCC Head of Transport & Planning; Wade Holmes, SCC, Service Manager, Integrated Transport; Richard Tyldsley, Go South Coast General Manager; <u>Observers</u> Andrew Wilson, HCC Strategic Transport Manager (Public Transport); Emma Baker, SCC Strategic Transport Planner; David Garney, SCC Senior Transport Planner.
<u>Apologies:</u>	Andrew Wickham, Go South Coast Managing Director; Iain Steane, SCC Transport Policy & Sustainable Travel Manager; Richard Soper, South Hampshire Bus Operators Association (SHBOA).

Ref	Agenda Items	Presenting
1	Welcome & Introductions	Cllr Keogh
2	Minutes & Actions from Previous Meeting	All
	Minutes from the EP Board meeting held on 23 July were accepted and agreed at the meeting. Open actions were discussed, and progress noted. Action 3 – Youth tickets, RT advised that there are examples from around the country that could be worth looking at. Any discounted offers would require funding if anything were to be progressed. DG suggested looking at incentives for working apprentices in addition to students. WH also suggested looking at mobility credits. Cllr Keogh suggested that any offer should also include weekends and holidays to promote 7-day travel.	
3	EP Working Group Highlights DG and EB took the group through the slide pack and noted progress in the following areas. Hill Lane Bus Service Awarded to Bluestar who will undertake reliability checks along Hill Lane in the Autumn and confirm a commencement date in early 2025. RT suggested that this could be the February half-term week.	DG/EB

	<p>Action – RT to confirm the start date for service 19A serving Hill Lane and Winchester Road.</p> <p>Shirley supported services Bluestar has been awarded a new contract for Shirley services - 21 (formerly X11) and 22 (formerly X12) will commence service from Monday 28th October. Xelabus will operate these services until Friday 25 October.</p> <p>Pump-Primed Services Former City Red services are experiencing +20% growth on B*13 & B*14, +5% on B*15, B*19 and B*20. Investing in additional journeys has encouraged additional patronage by providing a more attractive timetable that meets customer needs.</p> <p>PB would like to see route specific cost per passenger information for the next meeting to show how pump priming is progressing towards commercial viability.</p> <p>Action – DG to arrange a report for the January Board Meeting.</p> <p>Marketing Campaign A marketing campaign designed to promote recent bus related improvements will run during November and December with the simple strapline <i>'It's never been easier to use the bus'</i>.</p> <p>The campaign will run across social media and traditional outdoor marketing and is a collaboration between SCC, HCC and the bus operators.</p> <p>PB is keen that cross boundary network promotion is a key theme of the dedicated website landing page.</p> <p>AW endorsed the joint campaign approach following the success of the HCC 'Our Bus' campaign.</p> <p>EB gave an update on the Infrastructure Programme and wider Work Programme, including work that will shortly commence on the Concessionary Fares Scheme 2025/26 and associated operator letters which will be sent out in late November.</p>	
4	Motions for Approval	All
	<p>Summer 5 for £5 Campaign EB ran through the analysis for the summer 5 for £5 scheme and presented options for the forthcoming Christmas scheme between 15th November 2024 and 5th January 2025.</p> <p>Recommendation 5 for £5 returns for Christmas 2024 between 15th November 2024 and 5th January 2025. Bus operators reimbursed at £3.50 per ticket sold and Grant letters issued.</p> <p><u>Motion agreed by all parties.</u></p> <p>Portswood Part-Time Bus Gate EB discussed the proposals for the bus gate which is expected to be operational between 7-10am and 4-7pm Monday to Saturday.</p> <p>TRO consultation will begin on Monday 28th October for a period of 21 days and delivery of the scheme is expected to take place from early 2025.</p>	

	<p>Recommendation To endorse the Portswood part-time bus gate and associated Active Travel Zone.</p> <p><u>Motion agreed by all parties.</u></p> <p>PB advised that improved bus journey times are locked into this work, if not done already. Need to agree data sources to be used in monitoring and evaluation reports.</p> <p>Action – the project team to ensure that improved bus journey times are included in this work and insights during the day are monitored for comparison with the bus gate operating times. An independent report will be provided and Go South Coast have been approached for data.</p> <p>RT confirmed that Bluestar will promote the scheme and will look at a potential service enhancement to coincide with the scheme.</p> <p>Action – RT to discuss internally and confirm.</p> <p>City Centre Bus Priority EB presented the feasibility and implementation of next phases of City Centre Bus Priority Loop over the next 18 months:</p> <p>Above Bar Street (South) Above Bar Street (North – Guildhall Square) Commercial Road Civic Centre Junction (banned turns) New Road Bargate Square (closed)</p> <p>Recommendation To endorse the principles and next steps in delivering bus priority in the City Centre and to report back following any consultation.</p> <p><u>Motion agreed by all parties.</u></p> <p>RT added that great work has already been achieved via TCF. An east-west replacement for Bargate Street is essential with the preferred route being along Civic Centre Road and New Road.</p> <p>SCC to identify future funding to deliver improvements for this project.</p>	
5	Round Table Update	All
	<p>Go South Coast</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patronage is up 7%, for both concessions and commercial fares, which may be attributed to the cost of living and people now using buses. • Better buses for Bluestar 20 are now in place and the Unilink contract in 2028 will specify new vehicles. • Punctuality has suffered due to the current roadworks, with 54% punctuality at the start of the Lodge Road works. • Overall network punctuality is around 79% which is 6% lower than the company want it to be, however Tap on Tap Off is helping to speed up boarding times. • New staff facilities are open in the High Street. 	

- The travel shop is open, and the company are awaiting the SCC lease agreement. They would like to install a driver toilet in the building.
- The Bluestar sponsored lighthouse is now located in the travel shop.
- Staff training for new Bluestar services 21 and 22 are in place.
- RT also highlighted challenges with intoxicated bus users and delays to emergency response times, and the impact on bus services.
- Fleet renewal is close to completion with 4 buses left to paint.
- 6x former National Express West Midlands Euro 6 full height double deck E400 buses have been sourced to assist with improving the fleet age profile.
- Next spring ten new buses will be delivered for the Barton Peveril routes. 98 seat tri-axle Evo Seti buses are being purchased.
- The Go-Ahead Group has recently committed to buying 1,200 new electric buses, including 22x Wrightbus Electroliners for IoW via ZEBRA 2 funding and RT noted that the cost of electric buses is reducing. PB advised that he is having ongoing discussions with the National Infrastructure Bank.

Action – PB to involve Go South Coast in National Investment Bank discussion and the aspiration and challenges for electric buses in the city.

Action – SCC to discuss how to raise emergency service response times with colleagues in public health and community safety and feed back to Bluestar.

SHBOA (on behalf of smaller operators)

No update received.

Hampshire County Council

- The Marchwood and Rushington TCF works are open and have received great feedback.
- The new Gosport bus hub is open and the Delme Roundabout improvements in Fareham are in place.
- HCC are progressing an alternative scheme to replace the Junction Road, Totton proposal. Jacobs Gutter Lane has been chosen.
- Bus stop improvements and clearways are progressing countywide.
- Bluestar 9 improvements are working with additional journeys proving popular. Additional journeys are also catering for Amazon Distribution employees at Hounslow.
- The Waterside Change Makers Community Group are not keen on recent timetable changes to Bluestar 9 in Calshot with a reduction in frequency.
- Leaders decision day this week. AW to provide a general BSIP update and will discuss the Rail Station Interchange Improvement Plan for all 48 rail stations in the county.

Southampton City Council

- The new Executive Director for the Growth and Prosperity Directorate is now in place.
- Cllr Keogh advised that he is pleased with the Enhanced Partnership and would not be interested in franchising. The bus needs to be front and centre of the Council growth plan.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RT advised that the company would be happy to look at improvements to frequency of Bluestar 4 and 7 using future BSIP money if available. • WH advised that the Shopmobility spaces adjacent to the Bluestar travel shop will be reviewed and noted that Bluestar require 2 spaces as agreed. WH will also discuss with Chris Brown the issues related to the outdoor food kitchen alongside the Bluestar travel shop. 	
6	Date of EP Board Meetings	All
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 21 January 2025 – Conference Room 3, Civic Centre. • 22 April 2025 – Boardroom, Empress Road. 	
7	AOB	All
	<p>A joint letter with Portsmouth (Solent Transport Committee) is being progressed lobbying for the DfT to retain the £2 bus fare cap.</p> <p><i>Action - EB to send letter to HCC to review.</i></p>	
	Date of next meeting: 21 January 2025 – Conference Room 3, Civic Centre.	

NEW ACTIONS FROM THIS MEETING

MEETING DATE	ITEM	RESPONSIBLE	ACTION	UPDATE	STATUS
22/10/24	1	RT	RT to confirm the start date for service 19A serving Hill Lane and Winchester Road.	Service 19/19A registration variation has been received and will commence on Sunday 23 February 2025.	Complete
22/10/24	2	DG	DG to arrange a report for the January Board Meeting detailing cost per passenger for the BSIP+ supported journeys.	Due to the nature of sensitive data contained within, this information will be sent to relevant attendees following the EP Board meeting.	Complete
22/10/24	3	TCF Project Team	To ensure that improved bus journey times are included in this work and insights during the day are monitored for comparison with bus gate opening times. An independent report will be provided and Go South Coast have been approached for data.	It has been agreed that punctuality data available through the DfT BODS dashboard will be used for the monitoring report.	Complete
22/10/24	4	RT	RT confirmed that Bluestar will promote the scheme and will look at a service enhancement to coincide with the scheme. RT to discuss internally and confirm.	Bluestar are working on comms to promote the bus gate and have previously promoted and supported the consultation. Bluestar have not found any suitable service enhancements as yet, however once the bus gate is operational, they can understand the impact and put some ideas together.	In progress