

## Portswood Steering Group meeting 4 minutes

### 1. Welcome/introduction/membership

#### i. Introductions

- a. Chair: Prof. Roger Brown.
- b. Members: Angela Cotton, Charlie Nicholson, Chris Zardis, Johnnie Dellow, Karen Edwards, Lawrence Coomber, Lyn Brayshaw, Paul Beard, Pete Thomas, Roger Munford.
- c. Observers: Cllr John Savage, Cllr Katherine Barbour.
- d. SCC Officers: Carolyn Ireland, Martina Olley, Wade Holmes.

#### ii. Apologies

- a. Members: Adam Tewkesbury, Adam Truscott, Ali Haydor, Andrea Sutcliffe, Barbara Claridge, Clare Diaper, Graham Johnson, Jeanette Maidment, Liz Murray, Peter Hull, Spencer Bowman, Sue Swallow, Vijay Chopra.
- b. Observers: Cllr Anne Marie Finn.

#### iii. Welcome from Chair

- a. Baseline monitoring report has not been shared with the Group yet as not finalised; will be circulated ASAP next week.
- b. HRA have sent comments on papers by email.

### 2. Minutes of last meeting

- i. *No further comments.*

### 3. Matters arising

- i. Resident of Uplands Estate (Roger Munford) now on Steering Group.
- ii. Modal filters
  - a. Why was a modal filter implemented in Highfield? Explained in PSG2 papers (on project website).
  - b. Evidence in support of modal filters has been mentioned by members – please share with secretariat to collate and distribute to the Group.
  - c. Don't understand rationale for the modal filter on Russell Place, and not on Brookvale Road.
  - d. Evident from existing modal filters elsewhere in the city that people do adapt.

- e. Traffic flows like water – when you close one route more flows down other routes. Council needs to make sure wider network is considered.
- iii. Roadworks, traffic and safety
  - a. Perception of more traffic now going through Brookvale Road while Russell Place is closed, but pre bus gate.
  - b. Perception of an increase in traffic and speeding on Abbots Way now Russell Place is blocked.
  - c. Points noted and will be built into evaluation of the trial. Council will listen to local opinion but needs to be data-led.
  - d. Why does the diversion take you along Abbots Way and not Highfield Lane? Diversion routes must direct drivers back to point A.
  - e. Note works are not yet finished- traffic flows will continue to change.
  - f. 20mph signage is installed very high up. This is done to prevent/discourage vandalism.

#### **4. December update**

- i. *No further comments*

#### **5. Construction update**

- i. Cycle parking is missing on St Denys Road spur, is it coming back? Bike racks have been removed from the pedestrian desire line. Replacement ones will be installed in mid-February where there is currently Voi parking. New racks and space for Voi will be incorporated into a parklet.
- ii. Confirmed that non-Southampton registered taxis can not use the bus gate times fully. This is due an existing exemption in the city for non-Southampton taxis which does not align fully with Portswood bus gate hours.
- iii. Letter does not give the trial start date. This has been communicated in a letter to businesses and will be in press release, social media and on Variable Messaging Signs.

#### **6. Monitoring**

- i. Trial timeline
  - a. WSP conducting the formal independent assessment. Baseline report nearly finished. Interim report will be based on traffic data. Final report on full data.
  - b. More frequent internal reviews based on readily available data. There are set escalation points for Thomas Lewis Way and bus journey times. Where thresholds are Amber or Red, this would require discussion

between officers and the Cabinet Member around potential interventions.

- Journey times on Thomas Lewis Way
  - Amber: 50-100% increase
  - Red: 100%+ increase
- Bus punctuality
  - Amber: punctuality remains similar
  - Red: punctuality reduces to 40%
- c. SCC confirmed that there is no permanent counter on Brookvale Road or St Denys Road spur.
- d. Vehicle Activated Signs including those on Brookvale do provide some data: total numbers exceeding speed limit.
- e. Residents to inform SCC if there are significant issues. Council should take opinions into account but also back up with data sources.
- f. What do the “X”s mean? The trial is doing more harm than good, so should be pulled. Stop points will use readily available data.
- g. Number of vehicles through the Broadway will not feed into trial stop/continue, but will be used for any decision to start camera enforcement.
- h. Steering Group will be updated on any changes to be made to the trial but not necessarily consulted, depending how quickly these need to be made. Per the Terms of Reference the Group will report to the Cabinet Member on any recommendations for the final outcome of the trial.
- i. Can dates in the timeline be more specific? E.g. “July/August 2025”. Timeline gives an overview but actual dates do depend on any early monitoring or changes. Trial is minimum 6 months, with WSP reports at approx. 3 and 6 months.
- j. Phasing changes to Thomas Lewis Way/St Denys Road junction were made in connection to the trial. There were expected to be more vehicles coming down the hill to the junction. Change has been made since baseline traffic data collection.
- k. Need to ensure Google Maps is updated with restrictions on the Broadway and Russell Place.
- l. Officers confirmed it is possible for the trial to be completely stopped, or amended and continued, at any time. Amending it does not affect the maximum 18 month trial duration, but would restart the 6 month initial consultation period.

- m. Another modal filter could potentially be added if there are safety concerns. Would require more resident support, which was mixed at previous consultation.
- n. Monthly assessment plan will be published on the project website.

ii. Monitoring plan summary

- a. HRA will do their own monitoring. Results can be circulated. HRA work is not official Council monitoring, but SCC will listen alongside other feedback received.

What about the other side of the Broadway? Anyone is welcome to conduct their own monitoring. Members from this area to discuss together separately.

- b. The Council appointed WSP via an ESPO framework agreement which is fully compliant with procurement regulations.
- c. Some feeling WSP handling of community surveys was not to expected standard. Would like to have more input in their questions for the next round (for the final report).
- d. Baseline monitoring report was expected in advance of this meeting but it has not been received yet. It will be sent ASAP next week. It is helpful to discuss in person to hear other members' comments and concerns. Chair suggested that members send in any comments on the report to the secretariat, and an additional meeting could be held if necessary.
- e. There is a list of all traffic surveys which will be completed in the Baseline report.
- f. How is air quality being measured?

Nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) monitoring is undertaken by SCC at various sites along Portswood Road and elsewhere in the city using diffusion tubes.

Although diffusion tube measurements are recorded monthly, a full year of measurements is normally required to calculate the annual mean, in order to establish any trends and to compare to previous years. Data is normally ratified and validated in the first quarter the following year, although data can be provisional beforehand. As diffusion tube monitoring is already established in the area, provisional monthly data during the trial can be compared to the same months of the previous years. The changes in traffic flows due to the bus gate and ATZ should also provide a good indication of the likely change in vehicle emissions within the study area.

Data will be assessed three times over the course of the project: pre-trial baseline, mid-trial initial impact assessment and near the end of trial final impact assessment.

In addition, in September 2024 we installed a Zephyr Air Quality monitor on Brookvale Road (between Highfield Close and Uplands Way). This provides detailed air quality measurements in real-time, and collects data on NO, NO<sub>2</sub>, O<sub>3</sub>, CO, SO<sub>2</sub>, H<sub>2</sub>S, CO<sub>2</sub>, TVOC, PM<sub>1</sub>, PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub>.

- g. Some members disagree with the extent of AQ monitoring, and think that data should be collected from a wider set of locations.

- h. Comments on Objectives

1. Dwell time is seen as a positive - not as “loitering” - as it is an established measure of economic activity, but it is recognised that it could have both positive and negative aspects.
2. Pedestrian Level of Service" (PLOS) refers to a measurement used to assess the quality of a pedestrian environment, evaluating how comfortable and safe it is for people to walk, considering factors like footway width, pedestrian volume, traffic flow, and the presence of obstacles.
3. What does CrashMap have to do with more space for walking? It relates to the road safety part of the objective.

Walking safety should consider the condition of pavements.

Cycling on the Broadway is safer because of the resurfacing.

Road Safety Audit has been completed on the design. Another will be completed once it is fully built.

If road safety does get worse, it may be hard to tell if it's as a result of the bus gate, or the scheme didn't go far enough.

Cycle safety on Brookvale will be checked under user scores (surveys) and assessment tools. Officers will be regularly travelling through on all modes and observing during first weeks.

Members could invite councillors on a walk/cycle around the area to understand any issues.

Need to make sure a sufficient number of people are surveyed from varied backgrounds.

Re. cyclists/e-scooters on the pavement- Vivacity camera on the Broadway can pick up split using road vs pavement.

4. What new modes are there? Objective includes improving existing public transport options. Objectives are applicable to trial and any permanent scheme – could be options in future for e.g. car share or cargo bike share.
5. “Decrease in vehicles parked” includes all vehicles, not just illegally parked.

“ATCs on the approach to Portswood Road”: what does that mean? A list of all ATCs and other traffic surveys conducted under the baseline report has been emailed to members previously. A map will be available in the baseline report.

6. How can the bus gate improve quality of life? The noise of some buses when they are stationary is terrible. Every closed shop is replaced with a fast food outlet which adds to the noise.

Noise levels (decibels) are not being monitored.

Hard to answer questions along the lines of "would you/do you cycle/walk more" as a result of a scheme; the answer may be technically no, but experience has improved.

7. “Decrease in vehicles in operating hours” - what about outside bus gate hours? This will be measured.  
Local roads are those covered in the map of traffic surveys in the baseline report (to follow).

Some parents won’t be captured in the surveys. Should make sure the survey captures parents outside the catchment area.

8. Reduction in offences is dependent on police officers on the beat.

Police are invited to Steering Group although haven’t attended yet. Officers have attended meetings held previously with local businesses.

## **7. Enforcement of bus gate and bus stops**

- i. Council needs to demonstrate that enforcement by cameras is necessary. We will make an assessment after a week. Any decision will be taken in consultation with Director and Cabinet Member.
- ii. What happens if people don’t pay PCNs? The Council follows a debt recovery process. This is already in place for PCNs for parking, other bus gates etc.

## **8. Future meetings**

- i. Next meeting Wednesday 26 March 5.30-7pm.
- ii. Members may decide to reconvene in advance to discuss baseline monitoring report.

## **9. AOB**

- i. Change in resources in Integrated Transport team will mean a change of personnel overseeing Steering Group. MO and CI will wrap up with the Council and not be at future meetings; WH and permanent team will ensure continuity.
- ii. Chair thanked MO and CI for their contributions to the Group and the project.

iii. Portswood Centre Planning

- a. HRA wrote to the Leader asking if Planning officers could defer a decision on the Portswood Centre until any outcome of the Portswood Project trial.
- b. The developer would need to submit a Transport Assessment demonstrating how they would mitigate any transport impacts of the development.