


Meeting Title:	 <p>Southampton Bus Service Improvement Plan</p> <p>Southampton Enhanced Partnership Board – Notes of Meeting agreed at the April 2026 EP Board</p>
Date:	20 January 2026
Time:	12:00-14:00
Location:	Executive Boardroom, Civic Centre, Southampton & MS Teams
Attendees:	<p>Pete Boustred, SCC Director of Transport & Planning; Wade Holmes, SCC, Service Manager, Integrated Transport;</p> <p>David Lee-Kong, Go South Coast Operations Director; Richard Tyldsley, Go South Coast General Manager;</p> <p>Andrew Wilson, HCC Strategic Transport Manager (Public Transport) (observer); Iain Steane, SCC Transport Policy & Sustainable Travel Manager (non-voting); Emma Baker, SCC Strategic Transport Planner (non-voting); David Garney, SCC Senior Transport Planner (non-voting).</p>
Apologies:	Matt Griffith, First South, Operations Manager.

Ref	Agenda Items	Presenting
1	Welcome & Introductions	PB
	<p>PB opened the meeting and introductions provided.</p> <p>PB advised that Councillor Alex Winning, Leader of the Council will oversee the Cabinet Member for Transport role until further notice.</p>	
2	Minutes & Actions from the Previous Meeting	All
	<p>Minutes from the EP Board meeting held on 21 October 2025 were accepted and agreed at the meeting.</p> <p>AW provided an update on the £1 Andover flat fare which ran between January and July 2025 to support the commercial network. Patronage went up during the offer and then reduced following the offer. Stagecoach introduced new Optare Solo midi buses to the Andover town network to coincide with the offer.</p> <p>PB is keen that operators are updated on plans for Mass Rapid Transit, and it was agreed that a session will be held before the next EP Board Meeting in April.</p>	
3	EP Working Group Highlights	IS/EB/DG
	<p>IS ran through the EP Working Group slides with the following discussion points noted.</p> <p>General comments:</p>	

- IS discussed the bus journeys per head of population figures. PB added that this is fantastic and good to show the partnership in action which has been achieved without a large BSIP settlement.
- RT is keen to see proactive PR to communicate the progress made. Compared to the BCP area, Southampton are doing well. The company are also happy to support with award submissions.

Action: SCC to progress award submissions and proactive PR with support from Go South Coast.

- RT advised that Bluestar 20 patronage has increased year on year following the St Denys works and would like to see increased promotion of the 24-hour services launched in August 2025.
- IS discussed the capital spend which is currently on programme to be spent. The RTI supplier contract has provided challenges but will be resolved shortly. A project change request will be needed for the reallocation of funding from the Portswood corridor to an alternative project and will be discussed at the April Board meeting.
- IS thanked Bluestar for help with the Northam Bridge consultation.

Park & Ride

- EB provided an update on Park & Ride.
- PB is keen to keep up the promotion of the new services and encourage stakeholders to advertise on their communication channels and via their company travel plans.
- RT asked whether a survey could be conducted at the West Quay car park asking people why they have not considered the Park & Ride service instead. This was considered a good idea by the group and will be progressed.

Action: SCC to arrange the car park survey and analyse the findings.

- RT added that the Park & Ride service could be added to the VMS signs when advertising football matches.
- DLK felt that in view of the quietness at the location, the customer experience is not enhanced at the car park until boarding the bus.
- WH advised that SCC are looking at future park and ride sites and the next step is for better bus priority along the western corridor. Ideas also include district centre park and ride sites.

EP Forum Feedback

- DG provided feedback on the EP forum with valuable feedback received on the new 19a service. DLK confirmed that the 19/19a buses will receive Hanover digital destination equipment.

Consolidated Transport Funding

- IS discussed the plans for the funding and PB provided an overview of how the funds will be passported from the new Combined Mayoral Authority to the individual Local Transport Authorities.
- PB advised that the highways budget is being looked at for the roads programme which will see improvements.

Cross Boundary Updates in Hampshire

- AW gave an update on the HCC programme and the benefits of the partnership in delivering good patronage growth across the Southampton area.
- PB asked whether Hampshire independent travel trainers can work with Southampton's when progressing initiatives.

	Action: HCC and SCC to arrange a meeting to discuss working together on Independent Travel Trainers initiatives to encourage bus usage.	
4	Motions for Approval	IS
	None.	
5	Round Table Update	All
	<p>Go South Coast</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ed Wills has rejoined the company as Managing Director. • Commercial patronage is decreasing 3-4% following the transition to the £3 capped fare and the company are forecasting reduced growth compared to 24/25. Concessionary pass usage continues to increase. • No new vehicles are planned for the new budget year, however four modern E400 MMC double deck buses will be transferred from Southern Vectis. • The company are keen to progress electrification and support plans for a Nursling Power Station. • PSVAIR will come into force from 1 October and will result in the 19/19a fleet receiving new Hanover electronic destination equipment. PSVAIR requires that all onboard next stop audio and visual announcements must be working. • Bluestar buses now feature rail departure announcements for services calling at rail stations. <p>Hampshire County Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updates provided during the meeting and included in the slide pack that accompanies these notes. <p>Southampton City Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PB discussed plans for devolution with the Combined Mayoral Authority Mayor expected in two years' time. A Chief Executive appointment for the new combined authority is expected and supporting teams will follow. • PB added that there will be a greater focus on Local Government Reorganisation going forward with Council specific priorities to be agreed. • PB advised that a Shirley by-election will take place in March and that an announcement on whether on local elections will take place in May is expected. • PB discussed the new Growth & Prosperity Plan listing the big projects, including MRT and Northam Rail Bridge. • WH added that the new 3-year Local Transport Plan Implementation Plan has now been adopted. 	
6	Date of EP Board Meetings	DG
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 23 April 2026, 10-12pm, Bluestar Boardroom. • Tuesday 14 July 2026, 12-2pm, Civic Centre Executive Boardroom. 	
7	AOB	All
	AW advised to note that the Local Transport Consolidated Funding letters also included reference to ferry operations.	

NEW ACTIONS FROM THIS MEETING

MEETING DATE	ITEM	RESPONSIBLE	ACTION	STATUS
20/1/2026	3	SCC/GSC	SCC to progress award submissions and proactive PR to communicate the network growth with support from Go South Coast.	Completed.
20/1/2026	3	SCC	SCC to arrange the survey at West Quay Car Park asking people why they have not considered the Park & Ride service and analyse the findings.	In progress.
20/1/2026	3	HCC/SCC	HCC and SCC to arrange a meeting to discuss working together on Independent Travel Trainers initiatives to encourage bus usage.	In progress.