



Solent Land and Infrastructure Board

We will be receiving a presentation this morning from the Solent LEP on the important Transport Investment Plan. This work is helping support the work of the Solent Land & Infrastructure Board. I am intending to represent Solent Transport on both the Board and the Transport Investment Plan Steering Group, assisted by Keith Willcox. This will ensure that Solent Transport's interests are fully represented as the Transport Investment Plan work moves forward to the next stage.

Solent Transport Rapid Transit Study

Providing high quality public transport is essential in Solent to support economic growth and more sustainably accommodate the associated increase in travel demand. Where high quality public transport has been provided, usage has increased significantly and makes a significant contribution to reducing traffic congestion. However, public transport provision in many parts of Solent is relatively poor, leading to high levels of car use and congestion, which are detrimental to future economic growth.

In order to address this, Solent Transport has recently commissioned Atkins to undertake a "Rapid Transit" study. This will build on and complement the Transport Investment Plan work commissioned by the Solent LEP and aims to establish a public transport vision for 2036. Consideration will be given to all modes, including rail, bus and ferry.

In order that the Vision is practical and deliverable, engagement with key partners is essential and an initial workshop was held last week, with representatives from Network Rail, South West Trains, PUSH and the South Hampshire Bus Operators Association. We look forward to developing the Strategy over the coming weeks.

Rail issues

Rail is a key theme of this Joint Committee, with agenda items covering important consultation responses to the South Western Franchise Specification and Crossrail 2 proposals.

More recently, the Department for Transport has opened a consultation on Sir Peter Hendy's review of Network Rail's investment programme. I understand that the majority of planned capacity improvements on the South Western network during Control Period 5 should progress as planned. However, it is important work continues to develop schemes for Control Period 6 that will be essential to increase capacity and improve services during the new South Western franchise period. I will ask my offices to respond to this consultation and for this to be ratified at the next Joint Committee.

Low Emission Bus Scheme

We are still waiting to hear the outcome of the Low Emission Bus Scheme bid, which was submitted at the end of October. This has been delayed because the Department for Transport is currently awaiting a response from the European Commission on the status of its State Aid application. The DfT is hoping for a response soon from the Commission.