

**Report to the
Transport for South Hampshire Joint Committee**

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Report by: Frank Baxter, Southampton City Council

tel: 02380 832079 **email:** frank.baxter@southampton.gov.uk

Subject: A South Hampshire Smartcard

Purpose of the Report

This report seeks Joint Committee authority for officers to undertake all work required to submit a bid to the Regional Transport Board (RTB) or other funding bodies to fund the development and delivery of a sub regional smartcard transport scheme. It also sets out the benefits of a sub regional smartcard scheme.

Recommendation

- 1. That approval be given for the submission of a bid to the Regional Transport Board for funding to deliver a sub regional smartcard scheme including if necessary the authority to seek the bringing forward of Access to Southampton Regional Funding Allocation.**

Introduction

1. A sub regional smartcards scheme offers a number of considerable benefits to the Joint Committee members, District Councils and public transport operators in South Hampshire as well as users of public transport.
2. The London Oyster Card is one example of a highly successful smartcard scheme. Key outcomes of such a scheme would meet challenges and policy aspirations in Local Area Agreements, Community Strategies, Local Transport Plans carbon reduction strategies, active travel, social exclusion and a range of other local strategies. Key outcomes expected from such a scheme include:
 - (i) Outcome 1 - Increased patronage on all forms of public transport through:
 - (a) better quality public transport experience for users;

- (b) increased bus reliability due to reduced boarding times;
 - (c) seamless integration of ticketing for public transport journeys involving interchange between modes;
 - (d) opportunities to apply tactical pricing mechanisms to generate increased ridership eg a Solent Travel Card enhancement;
- (ii) Outcome 2 - Compliance with statutory requirements of the concessionary fares scheme by:
- (a) potentially funding the statutory requirement of the concessionary fares scheme to issue ITSO smartcards for all pass holders;
- (iii) Outcome 3 – Better data and evidence on public transport journeys to allow:
- (a) clarity of data on actual concessionary fares to support concessionary fares appeals processes;
 - (b) personalised journey data allowing tactical deployment of marketing and smarter choice initiatives;
 - (c) better identification and design of other public transport schemes.
- (iv) Outcome 4 – A range of other benefits
- (a) the opportunity to use smartcards for a range of other local authority functions like car parking charges and library cards. Consequently they present opportunities for service enhancement in a range of non transport areas and opportunities for wider costs savings for local authority delivered services involving low costs transactions;
 - (b) reduced carbon emissions;
 - (c) improved road safety as a result of a shift from more dangerous forms of transport to public transport;
 - (d) the opportunity to utilise smartcard technology deliver improved Real Time Information schemes in all authorities at minimal cost compared to existing scheme or where schemes already exist reduce ongoing revenue costs;

- (e) public transport schemes of this nature tend to be positively influential in terms of improving social exclusion and tackling social inequality;
 - (f) improved health and wellbeing of public transport users as a result of more active lifestyles associated with public transport use.
3. Smartcards are most effective when a scheme covers a wide area and all major public transport operators. This is because for the customer the benefits of a smartcard scheme are greater the larger and more comprehensive the scheme. This is why a sub regional scheme offers considerable benefits over proceeding with current plans to deliver a number of uncoordinated local schemes.
 4. An initial gathering of public transport operators, South West Trains, Ferry operators, all major bus companies, Southampton University and local authority officers across the sub region was very positive with all supporting the principle of taking forward a bid proposal to the RTB.

Financial issues

5. The cost of developing the bid will be in officer time. Total costs of the scheme will depend on the design of the scheme but would be between £5 million and £10 million. If successful a bid to the RTB would seek to cover the costs of delivering a back office for processing card transactions, card issue and purchase, the delivery of smartcard readers on all forms of public transport including ferry.
6. An option for funding the scheme may be to bring forward funding allocations post 2014 for Access to Southampton scheme. Regional Funding Allocations (RFA) post 2014 is not guaranteed and is at risk because of the funding climate associated with the recession and likely Government spending cuts. The Delivering a Sustainable Transport System work currently in progress takes a back to basics type approach to identifying schemes. It further reinforces the fact that the Access to Southampton RFA allocation is not guaranteed. It is therefore considered prudent to bring forward funding for scheme which are capable of doing so in order to maximise future funding potential.
7. The following projects are also being considered for bringing forward:
 - (i) enhancement of existing Urban Traffic Control systems to provide high quality Urban Traffic Management and Control (UTMC) for the sub-region;
 - (ii) expansion of Southampton Legible City into a sub-regional wide Legible South Hampshire project. The initial work on this project, for which some funding has been allocated, will deliver high

quality maps and on-street wayfinding units in Southampton City Centre to encourage walking and boost the local economy. However, this project has the scope to be expanded to provide high quality, consistent and integrated transport information, predominantly for walking, cycling and public transport across the sub-region to encourage the use of these alternative modes to the private car;

- (iii) development of a sub-regional Smarter Choices project to promote more sustainable travel choices across the sub-region.